

Lessons on Integration of Residents of Asian Ancestry Offered by California and New Jersey Communities with Large Asian Populations -Final

Subcommittee on Asian Communities

Lexington 2020 Vision Committee

2020visioncmte@lexingtonma.gov

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

Since 2010, Lexington's Asian residents have substantially increased their participation in the Town's elected and appointed bodies and in PTA/O leadership positions. Currently, Asian parents represent about 20 percent of the members of PTA/O boards, slightly less than the estimated percentage of Lexington's Asian residents – 22 percent. On elected and appointed Town bodies, by contrast, Asian residents are still under-represented and account for only about 10 percent of all participants. Moreover, challenges remain in achieving a more complete blending into the existing social fabric of the community: There are few visible signs of sustained social interaction and integration between Asian and non-Asian residents. Such observations suggest that Lexington is not fully benefitting from the cultures and experiences of our Asian residents and vice-versa.

Because there are many municipalities in the U.S. with much larger Asian populations than ours, the Lexington 20/20 Vision Committee decided to form the Subcommittee on Asian Communities to learn from such municipalities about “relationships between the Asian communities and other communities, focusing on practices or initiatives that proved to be effective in enriching the life of the community as a whole or engaging the Asian communities in civic activities.”

Subcommittee Activities

The Subcommittee's first step was to select the municipalities with large Asian populations to be included in the study. In making the selection, it applied the following criteria: (1) population similar to Lexington; (2) median household income comparable to Lexington's; (3) Asian adults with high educational attainment; and (4) civic participation of Asian residents higher than Lexington's. By applying these criteria, the Subcommittee identified 12 municipalities: eight in California and four in New Jersey.

In the next step, the Subcommittee invited more than 60 leaders in the 12 benchmark municipalities to complete surveys designed to reveal practices that might contribute to the integration of Asian residents into the life of the community. With the advice from their counterparts in Lexington, survey questions were developed for the mayor, the city manager, the head of the school board, the superintendent of schools, leaders of ethnic communities and PTA/O leaders. The survey questions were then transformed into SurveyMonkey instruments by students at Framingham State University. The students, under the leadership of the director of Center of Social Research at Framingham State University also analyzed the survey results.

More than 20 of the 25 survey respondents agreed to speak with their Lexington counterparts and members of the Subcommittee after completing the survey. The ensuing dialogues raised topics not included in the survey, and proved to be very informative. One of the conversations led to a two-day visit by a delegation of leaders from a California school district. The visit consisted of multiple working sessions with School and Town leaders and an evening forum open to all. Using a combination of literature research and conference calls, the Subcommittee also studied a program to enhance relations between Asian and non-Asian residents in one California city.

Findings

The study identified many potentially valuable practices; most can be characterized as creating deeper awareness of the community's diversity and building relationships across cultures:

- *Meaningful outreach.* Many respondents recommended that civic leaders build personal relationships with leaders in the Asian communities and networks to draw them and members of their communities into various aspect of the life of the community.
- *A standing committee on diversity.* The objective is to become adept at both theory and practice of diversity – identifying concepts in the literature and elsewhere, and recommending practical applications for the community.
- *Diversity training for all.* We learned of ongoing diversity training for teachers and administrators, for municipal employees and for leaders of PTA/O organizations.
- *Dual immersion schools.* We learned of two districts with dual immersion Mandarin-English elementary schools and one with a Spanish-English dual immersion school.
- *Stress in schools.* All school leaders mentioned it; all had programs aimed at dealing with it.
- *Role of the recreation department.* In addition to libraries, which are known to play important roles in integrating Asian residents, we learned about non-traditional programs offered by recreation departments.
- *Service organizations as promoters of diversity.* Rotary Clubs in two municipalities decided to attract a more diverse membership, and became stepping stones to elected office for Asian residents.
- *A Caucasian on the board of an Asian community organization.* To our knowledge, this idea has not been implemented anywhere. However, it was recommended by one City Manager as one way of building a trusting, candid dialogue between cultures.
- *Integration at the neighborhood level.* In one municipality, block parties have been used to help neighbors get to know one another, and to knock down stereotypes.
- *One courageous leader can initiate change.* In one municipality, the City Manager's leadership still echoes in programs he established, years after he retired.
- *In the long run, a systems approach.* Sustaining a successful diversity program requires more than a handful of committed individuals; it must be woven into the life of the community. It requires measurable goals and a commitment at continuous improvement.

Recommendations*Recommendation 1 – For the Town Manager and the Superintendent*

Take the lead in establishing a multi-stakeholder standing body on diversity theory and practice. After becoming familiar with relevant literature, its first task should be to assess and select diversity training programs for their respective areas of responsibility and influence. In budgets for the next fiscal year, include funds for diversity training. Target date for establishing the group: June 30, 2017.

Recommendation 2 – For the Town Manager, the Board of Selectmen, the Superintendent and the School Committee

Establish a higher priority for getting to know, at a personal level, leaders of Lexington's Asian community organizations. In addition to becoming acquainted at the organizations' meetings and functions, we recommend that this initiative include one-on-one, informal meetings. Target date: Begin immediately.

Recommendation 3 – For the leaders of the Asian community organizations

In addition to the steps that have already been taken, viz., communicating with civic leaders, supporting the Lexington community and collaborating with PTA/O organization:

- As a complement to Recommendation 2, get to know at a personal level the Town Manager, members of the Board of Selectmen, the Superintendent and the members of the School Committee. Target date: Begin immediately.
- Strengthen programs to help newcomers integrate into the community. Target date: Begin immediately.
- Consider sponsoring leadership training for potential leaders along the lines offered by Cupertino-based Asian Pacific American Leadership Institute. Target date: June 30, 2017.

Recommendation 4 – For the Town Manager

- Encourage hiring more Town employees of Asian ancestry. Target date: Begin immediately.
- Explore broadening the programs of the Recreation Department to include even more offerings of interest to families of Asian ancestry, particularly when such programs would be expected to have a broad appeal. Target date: June 30, 2017.
- Pilot the concept of a block party program. Target date: December 31, 2017.

Recommendation 5 – For the PTA/O Presidents' Council

- In collaboration with the Asian community organizations, continue to host forums fostering participation in school volunteer programs.
- Request a seat on the diversity committee as described in Recommendation 1 when it is being formed. Target date: To coincide with implementation of Recommendation 1.

Recommendation 6 – For the Superintendent

- Increase efforts to hire principals who reflect the demographics of the student body. Target date: Begin immediately
- Encourage principals to hire a more diverse staff. Target date: Begin immediately.
- At the high school level, adopt the practice of guidance counselors holding meetings with students and their parents to review progress and to plan the following year's academic program. Target date: June 30, 2017.
- Consider setting up a resource along the lines of the Wellness Center
- Consider the creation of a body similar to the Student Advisory Council.

Recommendation 7 – For the 20/20 Vision Committee

- Continue to monitor progress toward increased integration.
- Convene a session in May 2017 to assess progress following a format similar to that used in May 2015.

Recommendation 8 – For all of the above

Although most of the above recommendations concern Lexington's Asian community, the Subcommittee recognizes that they comprise concepts that apply to people of all backgrounds.

1 INTRODUCTION

Background

Since 2010, Lexington residents of Asian ancestry have been participating in civic affairs in increasing numbers. They represent about 22 percent of the Town's population and now account for about 20 percent of the members of PTA and PTO general boards. Thus, they are well represented on these school-related bodies. On elected and appointed Town bodies, by contrast, Asian residents are still under-represented as they account for only about 10 percent of all participants. Moreover, challenges remain in achieving a more complete blending into the existing social fabric of the community: There are few visible signs of sustained social interaction and integration between Asian and non-Asian residents. Such observations suggest that Lexington is not fully benefitting from the cultures and experiences of our Asian residents and vice-versa.

As our Asian community organizations, our PTAs and PTOs, and our Town officials continue to explore pathways to greater integration, the following question arose: Can Lexington learn about increasing integration from the practices and initiatives of communities in the U.S. with larger percentages of Asian residents? These communities have had many more years to work out effective solutions that may be of relevance to Lexington.

A recommendation for learning from communities with large Asian populations was included in the Report of the Demographic Change Task Force, published in 2010. The Task Force and its successor, the Subcommittee on Demographic Change, were chartered by Lexington's 20/20 Vision Committee, which has a continuing interest in the topic of diversity and integration. Thus, in early 2015, it called for the formation of the Subcommittee on Asian Communities to consider the question.

Charter

The objectives established for the Subcommittee are:

1. *Identify practices and initiatives that might be considered for adoption in Lexington to*
 - a. *increase the civic engagement of its Asian residents.*
 - b. *benefit from the diverse cultures and experiences of its Asian residents*
2. *Identify experiences of communities with large Asian populations which Lexington should avoid replicating*

The complete charter, shown in **Appendix A**, calls for the Subcommittee to use Census data to identify municipalities with large percentages of Asian residents, and then to use secondary sources to learn about "relationships between the Asian communities and other communities, focusing on practices or initiatives that proved to be effective in enriching the life of the community as a whole or engaging the Asian communities in civic activities." In the subsequent step, the Subcommittee is asked to focus its investigations on "communities whose demographics resemble Lexington's." The Subcommittee is to "[c]onduct an intensive study of these communities, including Town documents, newspaper reports and interviews with community leaders."

Committee Membership

The Subcommittee was formed during July and August 2015, and held its first meeting in September. Its membership consists of six representatives from Lexington's three Asian community organizations, five at-large members and two members of the Lexington 20/20 Vision Committee.

<i>Member</i>	<i>Affiliation</i>
Becky Barrentine	At Large
Margaret Coppe	20/20 Vision Committee
Nancy Corcoran-Ronchetti	At Large
Pat Costello	At Large
Tanya Gisolfi	At large
Margaret Heitz	At large
Dan Krupka, Chair	20/20 Vision Committee
Susie Lee-Snell	Korean Organization of Lexington
Faith Lin	Chinese American Association of Lexington
Shoba Reginald	Indian Americans of Lexington
Jordan Shin	Korean Organization of Lexington
Manasi Singhal	Indian Americans of Lexington
Bin Zhou	Chinese American Association of Lexington

Subcommittee Activities

Using 2010 Census Bureau data, the Subcommittee began by identifying municipalities in California, New Jersey, New York and Washington whose Asian residents represented more than 20 percent of the total population. Because over 30 municipalities in New Jersey and over 100 in California met the criterion, we decided to restrict ourselves to municipalities in these two states.

We then created profiles of essential data on some of the qualifying communities: the population and its ethnic breakdown, the number of Asian residents on elected and appointed bodies, the total membership of these bodies, the ethnic makeup of the school system, information on organizations focused on Asian residents and interesting articles on the municipality. We concluded that assembling such information for more than 130 municipalities would result in much unnecessary work, and that we should concentrate only on municipalities whose demographics resembled Lexington's. By adopting this strategy, we reduced the number of suitable communities, which we refer to as benchmark communities, to 12 – eight in California and four in New Jersey.

Within each of these communities, our goal was to interview the mayor (or someone in the equivalent position), the city manager (or someone in the equivalent position), the superintendent of schools, the head of the school board, leaders of Asian community organizations, and leaders of parent-school organizations. We realized that these leaders might be reluctant to commit to such interviews, which would require at least 30 minutes. Consequently, we decided to start with an on-line survey in the belief that it would be regarded as less burdensome than an interview. We also hoped that a carefully constructed and thoughtful survey would stimulate the respondents to agree to follow-on discussions.

Survey questions were developed with the input of committee members and town and civic officials, employees, and volunteers. The survey instrument was developed by students affiliated with the Center for Social Research of Framingham State University under the guidance of Professor Marian Cohen. The last question on the survey invited the respondents to continue the dialogue with their Lexington counterparts. More than twenty agreed. One of the calls, with the leaders of a California school district, proved to be so interesting that we invited them to visit Lexington for more in-depth discussions. In

addition, we conducted a study of a program to foster integration, which has been in place in one of the benchmark communities for over 15 years.

During our project, Lexington leaders played an increasingly active role. They helped the Subcommittee define topics for the survey, led most of the dialogues with their counterparts and played the leading roles during the visit.

Outline of the report

We begin in Section 2 with details of the process for selecting the 12 benchmark municipalities and present their relevant demographic data. In Section 3, we turn to the surveys – the development of the topics, the construction of the survey instrument, the recruitment of civic leaders in the benchmark municipalities and the analyses of the responses. Section 4 is devoted to the dialogues with the civic leaders. We describe the management of the dialogues and summarize the findings. In this section we also include an account of the visit mentioned above and a summary of conversations with leaders of a municipality with a unique program, aimed at fostering relationships among residents. In Section 5, we describe our most surprising findings as a prelude to Section 6, where we present our recommendations. Our report includes four appendices; one of them consists of the report prepared by the Center for Social Research at Framingham State University.

Notes on terminology

Asian residents. We use “Asian residents” as a shorthand way of referring to residents of Asian ancestry. While we occasionally use the term “residents of Asian ancestry,” we find that repeated use of the term to be stylistically awkward. The simpler term “Asian” sounds unwelcoming, though unavoidable in some cases. We considered using “Asian Americans,” but believe that temporary residents who come from an Asian country – would not like to be called Asian Americans. We reserve that term for residents of Asian ancestry, such as elected officials, who are clearly U.S. citizens.

Integration. We use “integration” to connote welcoming actions to draw people into all aspects of the life of the community, while encouraging them to retain their languages and religions. It also connotes a bilateral act of mutual acceptance, and thus implies more than participation on civic bodies.

Municipality/community. “Municipality” is a generic term for towns, cities, boroughs, townships, etc. The municipalities represented in our study include eight cities, three townships, and a borough. We have chosen not to be consistent in terms: In many situations, we use “municipality” and “community” interchangeably.

2 SELECTION OF BENCHMARK MUNICIPALITIES

2.1 PROCESS FOR SELECTION OF BENCHMARK MUNICIPALITIES

We began by listing several states likely to have municipalities with Asian populations exceeding Lexington's: California, New Jersey, New York and Washington. We then used 2010 census data to identify municipalities in each of these states with Asian populations exceeding 20 percent. On the basis of this exploratory exercise, we decided to focus our attention on California and New Jersey, with 103 and 32 candidates, respectively.

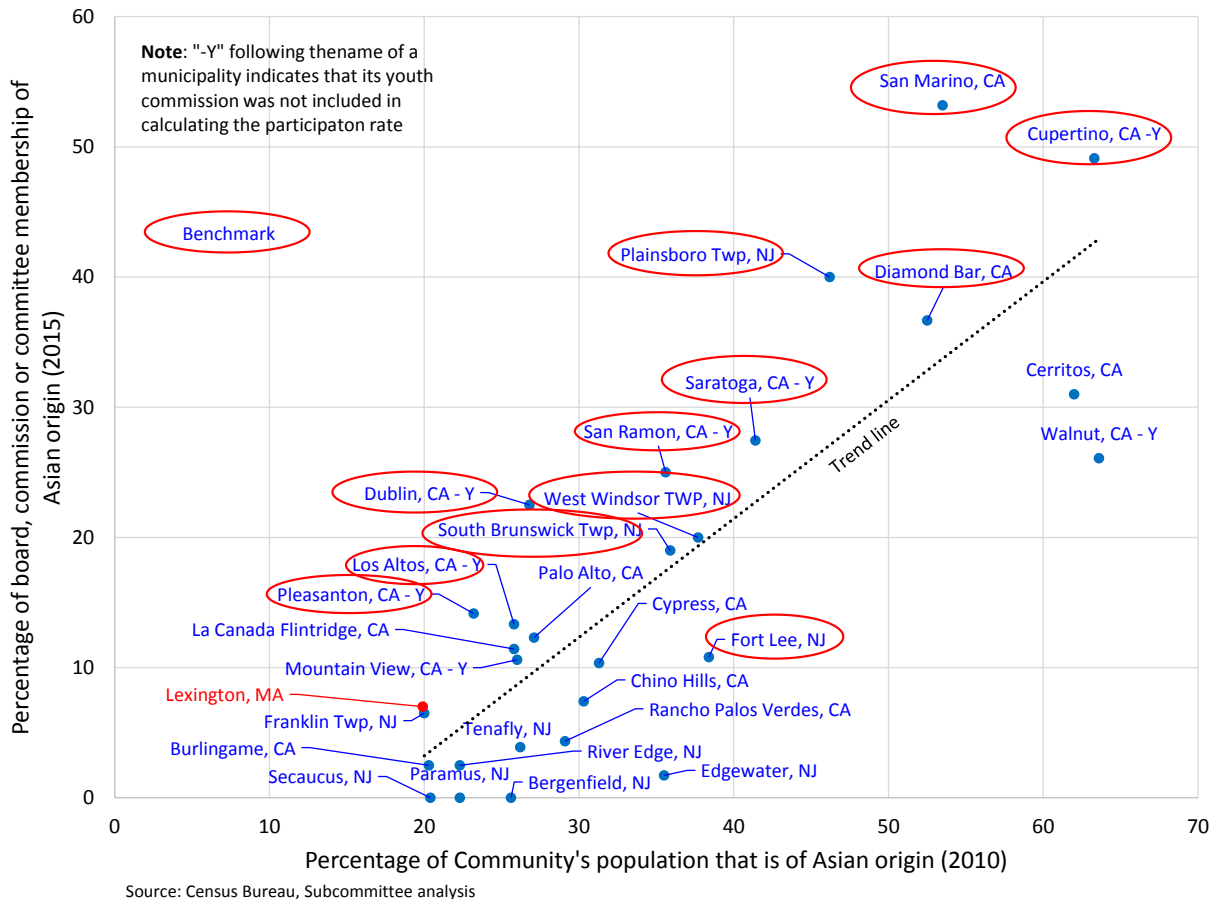
We were aware that, to gain support for any recommendations that might arise from our study, the demographics of benchmark communities – with the obvious exception of the size of the Asian population – would have to resemble Lexington's. We also acknowledged that we did not have the capacity to investigate a very large number of communities. Accordingly, we selected the following criteria:

1. The municipality's 2010 population should not exceed 75,000, and should not be less than 10,000. By comparison Lexington's population in 2010 was 31,394.
2. In light of the high educational attainment of Lexington's Asian adult residents, we should restrict our attention to municipalities in which at least 55 percent of Asian residents over the age of 25 had a bachelor's or higher degree.
3. Median household income in 2010 should lie between 80,000 and 160,000 dollars.

Application of the above criteria reduced the list of potential benchmark municipalities to 35 – 21 California and 14 in New Jersey. In these municipalities Asian residents represented from 20 percent to 64 percent of the total population.

It is important to note that, up to this point, the selection criteria did not include any characteristic that would suggest that these communities should serve as potential models for us. To select the final candidates, therefore, we investigated the civic participation of their Asian residents: Using data from relevant web sites – usually the municipality's web site and the web site of its board of education – we computed the percentage of elected and appointed officials that were of Asian ancestry as of December 2015. We used surnames and photos, where available, to identify Asian residents. Several of the California municipalities had a large teen or youth commission, with a preponderance of students of Asian ancestry. To create an equitable comparison with communities without such commissions, we excluded youth commissions from our analyses.

To make the final selection, we plotted the civic participation defined as the percentage of the board, commission or committee membership in 2015 against the percentage of the community's population of Asian ancestry in 2010. The plot, including an Excel-generated trend line, is shown in **Figure 1**. Municipalities with youth commissions, excluded in computing civic participation, such as Cupertino and Saratoga, are indicated with a "- Y."

Figure 1- Participation rate for Asian residents in 2015 vs. percentage of Asian residents in 2010

Although all municipalities lying above the trend line merit consideration, we limited ourselves to 11 benchmark communities; they are circled in red. We included Fort Lee, New Jersey despite the fact that its point lies below the trend line, because it is the only municipality in our sample with a Korean majority. Our selections' Asian percentages range from 23 for Pleasanton to 64 for Cupertino. San Marino's civic participation rate of 53 percent is the highest among the benchmark municipalities. As shown, Lexington's Asian civic participation rate was 7 percent in December 2015.

Despite its apparent rigor, the process for picking the benchmark municipalities should not be considered as a completely reliable method for finding the best examples. A high level of representation of Asian residents on elected and appointed bodies indicates political integration, but is not necessarily a reliable indicator of social integration.

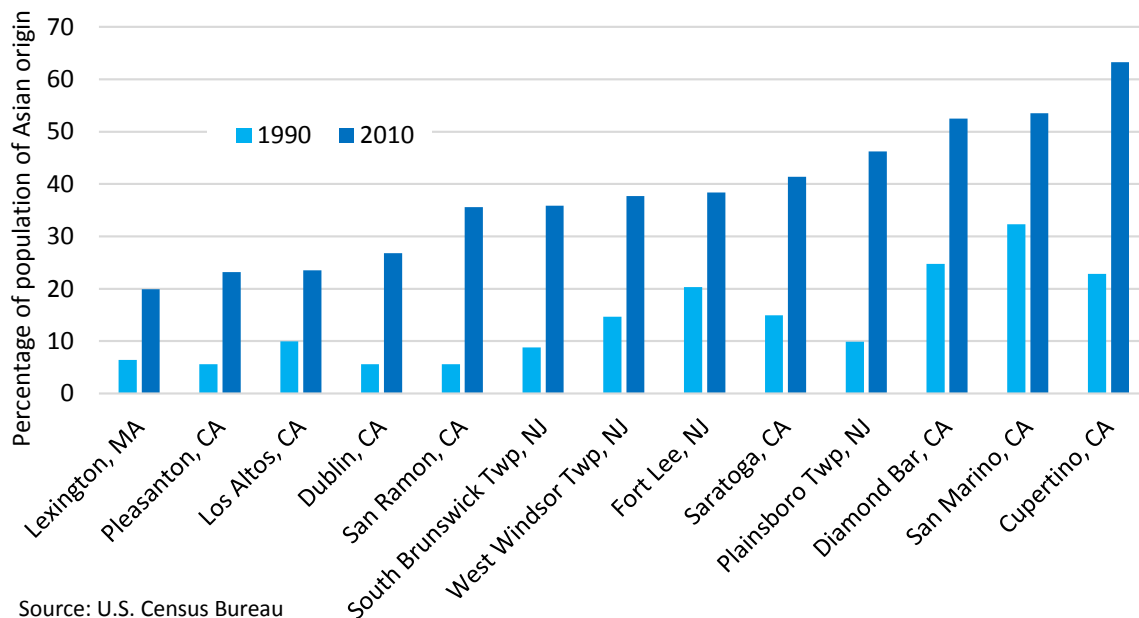
2.2 CHARACTERIZATION OF BENCHMARK MUNICIPALITIES

Table 1 shows the geographical dispersion of the 12 benchmark municipalities. Six are in the San Francisco Bay area, three in Silicon Valley and three strung north to south in the East Bay area. The remaining California communities are in the San Gabriel Valley, an area with many municipalities whose Asian populations exceed 50 percent. In New Jersey, three communities stretch southwest from New Brunswick towards Princeton. Fort Lee, New Jersey lies along the Hudson River, just south of the border with New York.

Table 1- Geographical dispersion of the 12 Benchmark municipalities

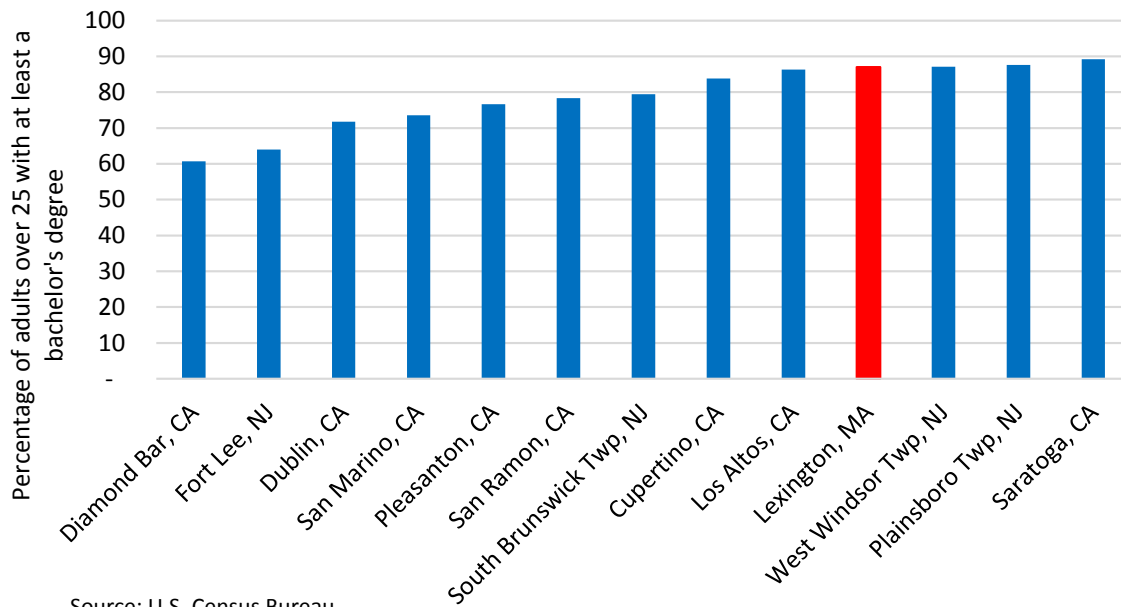
Region	Municipality
Silicon Valley	Cupertino, CA
	Los Altos, CA
	Saratoga, CA
East San Francisco Bay	Pleasanton, CA
	Dublin, CA
	San Ramon, CA
San Gabriel Valley	Diamond Bar, CA
	San Marino, CA
Central New Jersey	Plainsboro Township, NJ
	South Brunswick Township, NJ
	West Windsor Township, NJ
Northern New Jersey	Fort Lee, NJ

All of the municipalities have seen substantial recent growth in their Asian populations. **Figure 2** shows data for 1990 and 2010, with the benchmark municipalities and Lexington shown in the order of their 2010 values. The most rapid growth has taken place in the East Bay area.

Figure 2- Percentage of total population that is of Asian ancestry – 1990 and 2010

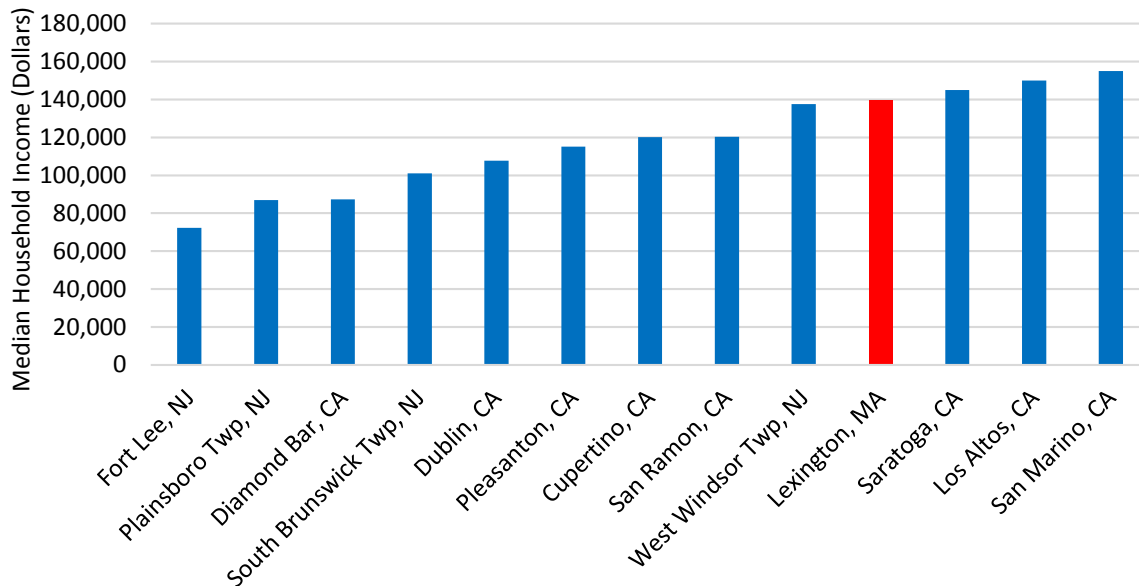
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

As shown in **Figure 3**, the educational attainment – defined as the percentage of residents over the age of 25 possessing at least a bachelor's degree – for the benchmark communities is remarkably high. Values in high 80s are characteristic of university towns.

Figure 3- Percentage of Asian residents over the age of 25 with at least a bachelor's degree

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 4 shows median household income in 2010 for the benchmark municipalities and Lexington. The municipalities follow an order similar to educational attainment.

Figure 4- Median household income for the benchmark municipalities and Lexington

U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2010, 5-year estimates

In all the benchmark municipalities, residents of Chinese ancestry constituted the largest percentage of the Asian population in 2010. In the East Bay communities and in Cupertino, the Indian population grew more rapidly between 2000 and 2010 than the Chinese population. If the trend continues the Indian population in these four communities may exceed the Chinese population by 2020. In the central New

Jersey municipalities, residents of Indian ancestry constituted the largest Asian population in 2010. In Fort Lee, New Jersey, the Korean population was much larger than the Chinese population in 2010, while the percentage of residents of Japanese ancestry, which had been comparable to the Korean percentage in 1990 shrank steadily from 1990 to 2010.

Details regarding the ethnic makeup of the benchmark municipalities for 1990, 2000 and 2010 are shown in **Appendix B**.

3 SURVEYS

3.1 OBJECTIVES

After selecting the 12 benchmark municipalities, the next step was to contact their civic leaders. We chose the following:

- The mayor
- The city manager
- The superintendent of schools
- The school board president
- Leaders of Asian community organizations
- Leaders of parent-teacher organizations

For each category of civic leader we wished to create a set of questions on topics of greatest interest to the corresponding leader in Lexington. For example, we knew that Lexington's Town Manager would be interested in learning about successful methods of recruiting employees of Asian ancestry, while the Board of Selectmen would want to learn about ways of encouraging Asian residents to run for office. While we were confident we could develop some of the questions, we realized we would need to enlist the help of our civic leaders in creating a useful set.

We initially considered arranging calls with the leaders of the benchmark communities, but decided we would increase the likelihood of achieving our objectives by starting with surveys. We concluded that carefully constructed surveys, would simplify the analysis of the responses; would demonstrate our commitment to improving the integration of Asian residents; and might entice respondents to participate in follow-on discussions. Such dialogues, we believed, had the potential of uncovering important topics not raised in the surveys.

3.2 DEVELOPMENT OF THE SURVEY INSTRUMENTS

Because we did not wish to burden our civic leaders with the entire task of creating a survey, we drafted questions for each category before soliciting their comments and suggestions.

The Subcommittee also required assistance in creating an on-line survey instrument and the analysis of its results. For this, we drew on the advice and support of Professor Marian Cohen of the Department of Sociology and Director of Center for Social Research at Framingham State University. Until recently, Professor Cohen, had been a member of the 20/20 Vision Committee. During that time, she played a vital role in the development of the interview guides used by the Subcommittee on Demographic Change; earlier, she had been a member of the Demographic Change Task Force. She was thus intimately acquainted with the topics we were investigating. To assist in the building of the survey instrument and the analysis of the results, Professor Cohen recruited four qualified undergraduate students in the Sociology Department at Framingham State University.

3.2.1 Responsibilities of the Center for Social Research

The Subcommittee asked the Center for Social Research to assume responsibility for the following tasks:

- Development of a set of data collection instruments for on-line use, one for each category of leader, based on questions formulated by the Subcommittee.
- Testing the instrument with members of the Subcommittee.
- Testing each instrument with the appropriate leaders in Lexington.
- Writing an informed consent document for use with each survey instrument.
- Collecting the data captured in SurveyMonkey and preparing it for statistical analysis.
- Analyze the data in terms of frequency distributions of responses.
- Identifying themes in the responses.
- Summarizing the above in a report.

The work of the Center for Social Research was supported by a grant of 10,000 dollars, which represented two thirds of the budget appropriated for this project by a vote of Town Meeting in March 2015.

3.2.2 Development process

The development of each of the six surveys proceeded as follows:

1. The Subcommittee drafted a set of questions for each of the six categories.
2. Lexington leaders, e.g., the Town Manager, the Superintendent, edited the drafts.
3. Members of the Subcommittee transformed the questions into statements appropriate for a survey instrument, and drafted sets of potential responses where appropriate. For example, in response to the question “How would you assess the rate of change in the participation of residents of Asian ancestry over the past five (5) years?” three answers are offered: (1) increasing, (2) about the same and (3) decreasing.
4. Under the direction of Professor Cohen, the sociology students developed six instruments using SurveyMonkey.
5. Members of the Subcommittee tested the instruments to ensure that the statements were easily understood, and that all the logical branches worked as intended. Their suggested revisions were then incorporated into the instruments by the students.
6. The Lexington leaders who had participated in the development of the questions tested their respective survey instruments.
7. Revisions suggested by Lexington leaders were incorporated into the final versions of the six SurveyMonkey instruments.

3.3 SURVEY TOPICS

Each of the six surveys consisted of four sections:

Section 1 – Questions targeted at specific category of leader, e.g. city manager, leader of an Asian community organization.

Section 2 – A set of questions for all respondents on how to increase the integration of Asian residents into the life of the community.

Section 3 – The respondent’s demographics, e.g., age bracket, racial origin, years lived in the U.S.A. if not born in the U.S.A.

Section 4 – An invitation to a follow-up dialogue with Lexington leaders.

3.3.1 Section 1: Topics for the mayor

- Current level of representation by residents of Asian ancestry on the city council or equivalent body
- Year of election to city council of first resident of Asian ancestry
- For the most recently elected council member of Asian ancestry
 - Motivation for running for office
 - Prior to election, methods used by sitting council members to encourage residents of Asian ancestry to run for office
 - Role(s) played by Asian networks or formal community organizations in the campaign

3.3.2 Section 1: Topics for city manager

- Estimated percentage of the municipality's employees that are of Asian ancestry (excluding school system)
- City manager's level of satisfaction with the current percentage
- Methods used to recruit employees of Asian ancestry
- Assessment of the methods' effectiveness

3.3.3 Section 1: Topics for the superintendent

- Recent modifications, if any, in curricula to reflect the large Asian student population
- Recent changes, if any, in the relationship between Asian and non-Asian students
- Steps taken by the school district, if necessary, to improve the relationship between Asian and non-Asian students
- Initiators of the above
- Measures to increase the number of teachers of Asian ancestry

3.3.4 Section 1: Topics for the head of the school board

- Policy regarding the enhancement of curricula to reflect the large percentage of students of Asian ancestry
- Policy regarding the observance of Asian holidays
- Response to changes, if any, in the observance of Asian holidays
- Policy, if any, of encouraging parents of Asian ancestry to participate in the schools
- Informal steps, if any, of encouraging parents of Asian ancestry to participate in the schools
- Encouragement offered by the survey respondent to residents of Asian ancestry to run for the school board
- Recommended progression of steps, if any, to achieve membership on the school board

3.3.5 Section 1: Topics for a leader of the Asian community

- Methods used to:
 - integrate new immigrants into the local community
 - promote ethnic culture to the local community
 - preserve their language and culture
 - encourage members of ethnic community to participate in parent-school organizations
 - encourage ethnic community to vote
 - encourage ethnic community to run for office in the local community
 - support members of ethnic community running for office

- encourage participation in local community activities
- encourage youth belonging to ethnic community to participate in civic activities
- interact with other ethnic community organizations in the local community
- Most important activities of the ethnic community ten years earlier
- Roles played by ethnic youth in promoting ethnic community engagement
- Greatest successes of ethnic community in increasing the participation of its members in the local community
- Greatest challenges of ethnic community in increasing the participation of its members in the local community
- Event or events that stimulated the ethnic community to become more involved in the life of the local community
- Estimate of percentage of Asian residents that may have triggered a concerted effort for the Asian community to become engaged in the life of the local community
- General advice regarding effective integration of ethnic community into the life of the community at large

3.3.6 Section 1: Topics for leaders of parent-teacher organizations

- Participation on boards of parent-school organizations by parents of Asian ancestry relative to their percentage in the community as a whole
- Ethnic community with highest relative representation rate on parent-teacher boards
- Participation on boards of parent-school organizations by parents of Asian ancestry relative to the level desired by respondent
- Assessment of barriers to participation on boards of parent-school organizations
- Steps taken by parent-school leaders in the past five years to increase participation of parents of Asian ancestry on boards of parent-teacher organization
- Changes in the activities of parent-teacher organization over the past five years that can be attributed to the participation of parents of Asian ancestry

3.3.7 Section 2: Suggestions regarding increasing participation of residents of Asian ancestry in the life of the local community

- Assessment of the overall participation of residents of Asian ancestry of all ages in social activities, organized sports, cultural activities, parent-school activities, neighborhood activities, businesses and business-related organizations
- Rate of change in overall participation over the past five years
- Advice to civic leaders in Lexington regarding pathways to increase participation of Asian residents in elected positions in the community

3.3.8 Section 3: Demographic information on respondent

- Ethnic origin
- Country of origin, if Asian
- Country of birth
- Years in U.S.A. if not US born
- Age bracket
- Years in current position (city manager, mayor, superintendent, head of school board)

- Positions held prior to election to current position (mayor, head of school board)
- Years lived in current community (mayor, head of school board, Asian community leader, parent-teacher leader)
- Participation in ethnic community organization
- Additional, optional, comments on any topic related to the survey

3.3.9 Section 4: Willingness to participate in further dialogue

The respondents were invited to discuss the above and/or related topics with the appropriate civic leader or leaders in Lexington, e.g., a member of the School Committee, Town Manager. If they accepted the invitation, they were asked for the best way for the Subcommittee to contact them.

3.4 RECRUITMENT OF CIVIC LEADERS IN BENCHMARK COMMUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SURVEY

The Subcommittee recognized that the recruitment of survey responders would present a challenge for the project: Could we convince the majority of the civic leaders in the benchmark municipalities to participate in the survey? Would a majority of the respondents agree to speak with us after completing the survey? The leaders in the benchmark communities needed to be convinced that our request was legitimate; that the topic was important, not only to the Subcommittee but to them; and that the success of our project depended on their participation.

Accordingly, the Subcommittee drafted a recruitment letter (**Appendix C – Recruitment letter**), which included the purpose of the project, background on Lexington’s efforts to increase integration, and the importance we attached to their participation. To demonstrate Lexington’s commitment to the project, the following signed the letters:

- The Chair of the Board of Selectmen
- The Town Manager
- The Chair of the School Committee
- The Superintendent of the Lexington Public Schools

The letter, mailed to 66 leaders in the 12 benchmark communities, invited the recipients to email a request for a link to the on-line survey. Two weeks later, reminder emails were sent from the office of the Town Manager. These were followed by phone calls by members of the Subcommittee and emails from the Subcommittee Chair using the 20/20 Committee email account.

3.5 SURVEY RESPONDENTS

3.5.1 Breakdown of responses to the invitation to participate in the survey

The invitation letter was mailed on February 26, 2016. Responses began arriving on February 29 and continued to arrive for the next four weeks. Over this interval, 28 agreed to participate in the survey, 3 declined, and 35 did not respond. Twenty-five completed the survey, 22 agreed to a follow-on discussion, and 19 followed up on their agreement to participate in the dialogue. At least one person from every benchmark community completed the survey.

3.5.2 Breakdown of responses by category of civic leader

Table 2 shows the breakdown of responses by category of leader. For each category, the table indicates the number invited to participate, the number who completed the survey, the number who volunteered to a follow-on dialogue and the number who took part in a dialogue. Because it is not uncommon for California municipalities to be served by more than one school system, the number of invitations to superintendents and heads of school exceeds the number of municipalities.

Table 2 - Breakdown of responses by category of civic leader

<i>Category</i>	<i>Invited to participate</i>	<i>Completed survey</i>	<i>Agreed to dialogue</i>	<i>Took part in dialogue</i>
City Manager	12	5	4	4
Mayor	12	7	6	4
Superintendent	13	4	4	4
Head of school board	13	5	5	5
Parent-school org leader	5	1	1	1
Leader in Asian community	11	3	2	1
Total	66	25	22	19

It was difficult to identify leaders of parent-school organizations because not all such organization have web sites. We also encountered difficulties in attempting to contact Asian community organizations devoted to a single ethnic community like the Chinese American Association of Lexington and the Indian Americans of Lexington. We discovered that such organizations are rare in California. Instead, there are organizations broadly supporting the interests of Asian Californians, such as the Asian Pacific American Leadership Institute (APALI), based in Cupertino, or Chinese schools that may also serve as ethnic community organizations. To ensure that we obtained the perspectives of Asian community leaders, we invited a few elected officials of Asian ancestry to participate in the survey. In the end, as demonstrated by the data in **Table 2**, we spoke with only one person considered to be a leader of the municipality's Asian community and one leader of a parent-teacher organization.

Because the Subcommittee wished to speak to more Asian community leaders, we continued to seek them out after completing the follow-on dialogues. In addition, well before the surveys were developed, we spoke with Dr. Michael Chang, who, in 1991, became the first Asian elected to the city council in Cupertino. Dr. Chang founded APALI in 1997, and continues to serve as its executive director.

3.5.3 Demographics of respondents

Of the 25 leaders who completed the survey, 8 were of Asian ancestry, and only one was born in the U.S.A. All the city managers and superintendents were white.

Table 3 shows the breakdown by racial origin for each category of respondent. For those of Asian ancestry, the table indicates the number of years lived in the U.S.A.

Table 3- Demographic information on survey respondents

Category	White	Asian	African American
City Manager	5	0	0
Mayor	4	3 (40-47 years in U.S.)	0
Superintendent	4	0	0
Head of school board	3	1 (U.S. born)	1
Parent-school org leader	0	1	0
Leader in Asian community	0	3	0
Total	16	8	1

3.6 SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

Below we report primarily on the topics on which there was some consensus among the limited number of respondents. In addition, we describe novel, potentially valuable ideas suggested by single respondents.

The following six sections summarize the responses to questions in Section 1 and Section 2 of the survey by the six categories of respondents. The topics correspond to those listed in **Sections 3.3.1 – 3.3.7**.

3.6.1 Responses of mayors (7)

Summary of responses to Section 1 questions

Although most of the recently elected Asian members of the city council or its equivalent were motivated by their interest in civic issues, some reflected a growing desire for representation of the candidate's ethnic community. In many cases, sitting council members encouraged residents of Asian ancestry to run for office by providing them with exposure to local government by appointing them to boards or commissions. Asian community networks employed standard methods to support their candidates – from helping to identify potential candidates to getting out the vote on Election Day. In one of the municipalities, the Asian community launched a program to register voters.

Summary of responses to Section 2 questions

All mayors report that overall participation by Asian residents of all ages in the life of their respective communities has been increasing during the past five years. In some municipalities, the participation is assessed as being high.

The recommended pathway to increasing participation in elected or appointed office starts with identifying potential candidates among leaders of Asian communities; then building relationships with the leaders, encouraging them to participate in activities that will allow the community to get to know them, and offering support along the way. One respondent invited Asian residents to join his campaign team, another recommended participation in school activities

3.6.2 Responses of city managers (5)

Summary of responses to Section 1 questions

No city manager reports that employees of Asian ancestry represent more than ten percent of the municipality's staff despite efforts to remedy the situation. None is satisfied with the current level of representation. The most successful methods to increase the number of municipal employees of Asian

ancestry are advertising on web sites known to interest the local Asian community and recruiting directly from high schools and colleges.

In a supplemental comment, one respondent reported that he had suggested that the Chinese community organization add a Caucasian to its board.

Summary of responses to Section 2 questions

Three out of four respondents report that that, during the past five years, overall participation by Asian residents of all ages in the life of their community has been increasing. In one community, it's judged to be unchanged, but the participation rate by Asian residents in that municipality is reported as being "high."

Recommendations for increasing representation of Asian residents in elected office include sustained outreach via traditional means, social media, and by getting to know the leaders and folding them into the political scene. One respondent encourages municipal employees to engage with Asian community organizations.

Suggested pathways to increasing their participation in appointed office include posting information about open volunteer positions on the municipality's web site, placing articles in local newspapers, and personal outreach and recruitment.

For increasing participation as PTA/PTO leaders, the recommendations start with encouragement to participate in classrooms, starting with Kindergarten, and providing mentors.

3.6.3 Responses of superintendents (4)

Summary of responses to Section 1 questions

Two of the four respondents made recent modifications in curricula to reflect the large percentage of Asian students in their districts, and recommend such changes. They made changes in History and English (no details given) and foreign languages, notably the addition of Mandarin and Korean. One respondent recommended that reading materials should include stories with Asian backgrounds and characters.

Two of the four reported that relationships between Asian and non-Asian students had improved, and attributed the changed atmosphere to the actions of committees appointed to improve the diversity climate and to professional development, relying on either standard methods, e.g. culturally responsive teaching strategies, or methods developed in the school district. In one of the two districts reporting improved relationships, administrators took the initiative. In the other, teachers, students, parents, administrators and members of the board of education participated.

All four respondents have attempted to increase the number of teachers of Asian ancestry, but only two report that they succeeded, and that the addition of the teachers was welcomed by the entire student body. The most frequently cited methods were attendance at recruitment fairs and direct contact with colleges and universities with teacher training programs.

Summary of responses to Section 2 questions

Suggestions for increasing participation in elected and appointed office were the same: Get out to their communities, get to know the leaders, and invite them to training programs. However, the respondents provided no information on the training.

For increasing participation as PTA/PTO leaders, the respondents recommend personal contact by parent-school leaders, celebration of their culture as part of PTA/O programs, serving their ethnic food at PTA/O events, and providing training.

3.6.4 Responses of heads of school boards (5)

Summary of responses to Section 1 questions

Four of the five respondents report that their districts have no policy regarding modifications to curricula to reflect the large percentage of students of Asian ancestry. One school district observes Diwali and Lunar New Year; for the staff, the two days are reserved for professional development.

Although none of the school districts has a formal policy of encouraging parents of Asian ancestry in particular to participate, three of the respondents report that their district employs a variety of methods of encouraging such participation. They range from expectations based on a tradition of strong participation to a formal program that invites parents to spend time in schools, observing classes.

Three of the five respondents report encouraging a specific resident of Asian ancestry to run for the school board.

Summary of responses to Section 2 questions

The heads of school boards report that, regardless of the current level, the overall participation by residents of Asian ancestry of all ages has been increasing over the last five years.

Their prescriptions for increasing participation in elected office is a familiar one: Engage the leaders of Asian communities; appoint them to committees and task forces; and provide training related to the roles and responsibilities of local elected bodies. For increasing participation in appointed office, recommendations include capitalizing on interest in schools and seeking out potential leaders in Asian communities. For growing the number of PTA/PTO leaders, the respondents recommend capitalizing on their interest in schools and using back-to-school nights to recruit parents to participate.

3.6.5 Responses of leaders of Asian communities (3)

Summary of responses to Section 1 questions

Only one of the respondents is a leader in a formal Asian community organization. We consider the other two to be leaders in their ethnic communities by virtue of their civic positions.

The respondents described the following initiatives undertaken by their ethnic communities:

- Assistance for new immigrants in the form of translation and introductions to professional services, e.g., physician and lawyers.
- Promotion of their ethnic culture via cultural festivals
- Preservation of their language via their own schools as well as in the public schools
- Support for candidates of their ethnicity during election cycles both now and ten years earlier

Challenges encountered included:

- Getting members of their ethnic community to volunteer in the local community
- Getting members of their ethnic community to vote

Only one respondent provided an estimate of the percentage of Asian residents that might trigger a concerted effort for the Asian community to become engaged in the life of the local community: 20 percent.

Summary of responses to Section 2 questions

Two of the respondents state that overall participation by residents of Asian ancestry of all ages in the life of the community relative to the population of this group is higher and increasing, while one reports that it is lower and has remained about the same for the past five years.

The respondents' recommendations for increasing the number of Asian residents in elected office include encouraging them to start in community organizations that interact with local government, and providing sessions on how government runs, apparently along the lines of Lexington's Citizens' Academy. The board of education would be a good first goal.¹

Participation in appointed office might be increased by ensuring that such boards and committees create an environment characterized by a willingness to listen carefully to non-native speakers, to understand the essence of their thoughts and to consider new ideas. One of the respondents suggested that Asian residents get more involved in education, water and transportation committees, but did not provide a rationale for the suggestions.

The respondents believe that more Asian residents might take on PTA/O leadership positions if they encountered a welcoming atmosphere and were encouraged by offers to share leadership responsibilities.

3.6.6 Response of leader of parent-school organization (1)

Summary of responses to Section 1 questions

The sole respondent is the leader of parent-school council that serves the same function as Lexington's PTA/O Presidents' Council (PPC). The respondent's council, which represents 33 schools, includes an Inclusion and Diversity (I&D) subcommittee made up of I&D representatives from the member schools. The council trains its members in culturally responsive practices, and tracks the diversity of its board to ensure that the metric continues to rise.

The respondent reports that five years earlier almost none of the individual school organizations held cultural events; now almost all host events for parents and students. She reports taking diversity into consideration when asked to suggest appointees to special committees.

Summary of responses to Section 2 questions

The respondent suggested that organizations such as PTA/O presidents' councils could play a role in increasing the number of Asian residents in elected office by providing training in governance (presumably, local government). She believes that, as the councils become more diverse, such education may stimulate more residents of Asian ancestry to run for civic office.

Because of the size and influence of the council that she heads, our respondent has been asked to suggest appointees to community boards. In doing so, she has kept diversity in mind.

Her advice for increasing participation as PTA/PTO leaders is to focus on advocacy and community betterment rather than on fundraising.

¹ It should be noted that Ravi Sakhuja was the first Asian resident elected to Lexington's School Committee. He served from March 2006 to March 2009. Eileen Jay was elected in March 2015.

3.6.7 Analysis of all survey responses

Because the number of Section 1 responses in each category is so low, it is inappropriate to draw any conclusions regarding trends. It is reasonable, however, to look for commonalities in Section 2 responses because the respondents were all asked the same three questions. In addition to topics on which there was consensus, we were seeking novel ideas. Two such ideas are described below.

Commonalities

The suggestions for increasing the number of Asian residents in elected or appointed position in municipal government or the number in leadership positions in parent-school organizations are very similar: Get to know the leaders of the ethnic communities; identify prospects for appointed or elected office; encourage their interest; provide support in the form of mentorship; encourage them to obtain training in how local government works and in leadership skills; and support their candidacy by finding appropriate opportunities.

Novel suggestions

- Add a non-Asian to the board of Asian community organizations.
- Establish an inclusion and diversity council at each school as well as at the PTA/O presidents' council level.

3.7 REPORT ON THE SURVEY BY THE CENTER FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH AT FRAMINGHAM STATE UNIVERSITY

In addition to developing the survey instrument and analyzing the results, the Center for Social Research at Framingham State University delivered a comprehensive report (**Appendix D – Report of the Center for Social Research**). It presents the background of the study, summarizes the work of the Center, and includes several appendices essential for our project. Most importantly, all the survey questions and respondents' answers are given in its Appendix B. This is the raw data from the survey. Its Appendix C consists of the summaries of answers by category of respondent, similar to Sections 3.6.1 to 3.6.6 above, while its Appendix D presents the overall themes. Appendix E lists the activities undertaken in the benchmark communities; Appendix F lists suggestions to increase participation; and Appendix G offers suggestions for questions to be used in the follow-on dialogues.

4 FOLLOW-ON DIALOGUES

4.1 OBJECTIVES

The Subcommittee wished to interview respondents who had completed the survey because it believed that such follow-on dialogues would present opportunities to:

- Verify responses on the survey
- Clarify responses on the survey
- Discuss other topics that require an exchange because they are nuanced and thus difficult to put in a survey
- Discover and discuss topics that were not included in the survey
- Develop a relationship with leaders of the benchmark communities thereby creating a foundation for future interactions

The follow-on dialogues accomplished these objectives. Crucial to their success was the participation of Lexington leaders. The Superintendent of the Lexington Public Schools, Dr. Mary Czajkowski and the Chair of the School Committee, Bill Hurley participated in all dialogues with school superintendents and heads of school boards. Similarly, Town Manager Carl Valente and Selectman Joe Pato took part in calls with their counterparts. Leaders of CAAL, IAL and KOLex conducted conference calls with Asian community leaders who had completed the survey. And Gretchen Reisig, Chair of Lexington's PTA/O Presidents' Council participated in the call with the lone PTA/O respondent.

4.2 MANAGEMENT OF THE DIALOGUES

When respondents offered to participate in a dialogue, they received a thank-you note from Carl Valente along with an estimated date for the call. When we stopped receiving surveys, we began to schedule the calls.

In preparation for the dialogues, the Subcommittee developed a short document for use by the Lexington leaders on the call. It consisted of questions, based in part on the respondents' answers on the survey and the profile of the benchmark municipality. The questions were also sent to the respondents to aid in their preparation. A member of the Subcommittee generally initiated the conference call, but would transfer the lead to the participating Lexington leaders. The Subcommittee took the responsibility for summarizing the call and for sending thank-you notes.

4.3 FINDINGS FROM THE DIALOGUES

4.3.1 Mayors and city managers (5 calls)

Because the topics covered with mayors and city managers overlapped significantly, we present a single summary of our findings. In only one municipality both the mayor and city manager completed the survey and volunteered to speak with us. However, when calls with two city managers were being scheduled, we learned that their mayors also wished to participate.

Our dialogues confirmed that libraries serve an important role in drawing in residents of Asian ancestry. The surprising finding is that, in some municipalities, the recreation department, sensing a demand from Asian communities, introduced Asian culturally-based programs.

Programs delivered by the library

- In one municipality, the Library sponsors multiple ethnic events, including the Chinese New Year observance, and ran a grant-funded program on how to integrate into the community, aimed especially at parents. In another, the Library has a Mandarin on-line service and conducts Chinese story-telling sessions.

Programs delivered by the municipality

- The recreation department in one municipality creates a welcoming atmosphere for Asian residents via:
 - A gallery with Chinese calligraphy
 - A program in Bollywood dancing for kids
 - A program in Oriental martial arts
 - A summer camp that runs multicultural games
 - The municipality's Festival of Traditions, which provides opportunity for diverse ethnic groups to showcase their cultures
- One municipality reports that its Asian Autumn Festival Party is the single biggest event in the city
- The police department in another municipality runs a youth police academy, which consists of 10 weeks in the community plus one week at camp. It is judged to be very successful at attracting Asian youth. The municipality has also opened two cricket fields that are heavily used.
- In yet another municipality, dragon boat racing is popular, with two major events held annually

Outreach to Asian communities

- One municipality reports multiple ways in which its Asian community is being drawn into the life of the city:
 - The municipality has a tradition of reaching out via city leaders, PTAs, civic clubs and Asian clubs to invite new residents to participate in their activities. The old timers ask newcomers to join them in going to an event that will get them involved in the life of the community.
 - Care is exercised by the city's leaders to ensure diversity in commission and committee appointments because they represent an important stepping stone to elected office
 - A service club in the city decided to diversify its membership, and invited leaders of the Asian community to join. Now it serves as another stepping stone to elected office for residents of Asian ancestry.
 - Newspapers are encouraged to include articles about the Asian community.
 - The city manager has made it a priority to get to know Asian leaders in informal settings, e.g., by inviting them to have coffee.

4.3.2 Superintendents and heads of school boards (5 calls)

Our conversations with superintendents and heads of school boards covered many of the same topics, and, in most cases we were able to arrange a call with both.

Our most significant discovery is that the topics that were uppermost in the minds of superintendents and heads of school boards differ somewhat from the topics in our surveys for these categories. While we learned that our respondents had developed strategies for addressing the diversity of their students, we also discovered they were equally focused on the management of stress in their highly performing – and competitive – school systems.

Strategies for managing diversity

- *Training for teachers.* Three of the school systems reported using a variety of diversity training programs for teachers. In one district, the training is delivered by the Anti-Defamation League. One district relies on culturally and linguistically teaching strategies, while the third uses the Responsive Classroom, “a research-based approach to K-8 teaching that focuses on the strong link between academic success and social-emotional learning.”²
- *Diversity Committees.* Two of the districts have diversity or climate committees. In one, there is a diversity committee at the district level, and one at each school. In the other, there is a diversity committee only at the district level.
- *Dual immersion schools.* Two of the districts have Mandarin-English dual immersion schools. Fifty percent of the classes are given in Mandarin, 50 percent in English. In both cases, the program was launched with a kindergarten class and was expanded as the cohort progressed through the elementary school grades. In one community, the program does not go beyond 3rd grade; in the other, it has reached 5th grade, and the district is considering expansion into middle school. One community with a large Hispanic population has a Spanish-English dual immersion school.
- *Partnership with a third party.* One school district has formed a partnership with the Silicon Valley YMCA to deliver Project Cornerstone. It “[e]mpowers all members of the school community—students, parents and caregivers, teachers and staff—to reduce bullying, promote achievement and help all students feel valued and respected.”³

Strategies for managing stress

- *Policies aimed at reducing stress.* Some districts, sensing that the pressure never lets up, arranged for the first term to end before the traditional Christmas break, and does not allow any homework to be assigned during this time. In one district, the weighting of homework has been reduced in calculating grades. One district has added a period to the school day during which the students may get extra help, do their homework or simply relax. In another, “Zen” stations have been added where students can calm themselves; if necessary, they are referred for professional help. Sometimes, going through the parents is the solution: One district sets aside one period during back-to-school night to describe to parents how to relieve pressure on their children.
- *College planning.* Having recognized that parents may put too much pressure on their children to strive for acceptance by a top college, some districts are conducting sessions for parents to educate them on the breadth of opportunities (“There are more than 20 universities!”). In one case, the district invited a successful entrepreneur of Asian ancestry, not affiliated with the

² <https://www.responsiveclassroom.org/> Accessed November 1, 2016

³ <http://www.lasdschools.org/District/Portal/Project-Cornerstone> Accessed November 1, 2016.

district, to carry the message. One district reported attempts to educate parents on the importance of extracurricular activities in gaining admission to college.

4.3.3 Leaders in Asian communities (3 calls)

Because only one of the survey respondents volunteered to speak with us, we used personal channels to identify others in the benchmark communities who would be considered as leaders within their ethnic communities. Here, we present the most valuable ideas from the three conversations.

- *Build personal relationships.* One of the respondents made the following suggestion: “Communication is the key, build personal connections, go out of comfort zone and make friends across cultural barrier. A better understanding of cultural differences helps to bring people together. ‘Can you make one Asian friend?’”
- *Recognize differences among – and within – Asian communities.* Even within the Chinese community, there are differences between the earlier arrivals, most of whom came from Taiwan, and those who are coming from the People’s Republic of China.
- *Training programs.* Cupertino has a formal training program called Leadership 95014. It might be described as Lexington’s Citizens’ Academy on steroids. Because it’s designed to ensure that Cupertino’s civic leaders are well prepared to carry out their duties, it’s an excellent program for Asian residents who are considering appointed or elected office. The training lasts for nine months; includes leadership training; requires participants to set aside a full day per month and to pay tuition of about \$1,000. The program is generally fully subscribed.⁴
- *Rotary Club as a training ground.* In two municipalities, the Rotary Club actively pursued a membership that reflected their communities’ demographics. In one municipality, presidency of the Rotary Club was a stepping stone to the City Council for a resident of Asian ancestry.
- *Use of social media.* Nextdoor.com and WeChat.com appear to be popular and an important component of outreach programs.

4.3.4 Leader of parent-school organization (1 call)

- *Build relationships with members of Asian communities.* Make a point of inviting yourself to events held by Asian community organizations. You can use the opportunity to signal your interest in their culture, and learn how you can better serve their community in your role as a leader in a parent-school organization. In addition, you will be able to identify and get to know their leaders, whom you might be able to recruit for your (parent-school) organization.
- *Increase the participation of Asian residents*
 - Identify local Asian community leaders and invite them to panel discussions at your events so they feel valued. Their participation is likely to attract members of their ethnic communities, who, in turn, can learn from the discussions and take the message back to their friends. This could create a virtuous cycle.
 - Enlist households with two working parents and/or those with limited time availability, by asking them if they have a few hours to give you over a long period of time, and then giving them a task to work on within that timeframe. This is a great way to introduce them to what you really do. Then, if you follow up by thanking them and demonstrating their impact on a project, they are more likely to get more involved and eventually become leaders.

⁴ <http://www.cupertino.org/index.aspx?page=1005> Accessed November 1, 2016.

- *Offer program in diversity management.* The parent-school organization offers diversity training to leaders of the organization.

4.3.5 Visit from leaders of the Walnut Valley Unified School District (serving Walnut, CA, part of Diamond Bar, CA, and part of West Covina, CA)

After the dialogues with superintendents and heads of school boards were completed, the Subcommittee decided that the discussions with the leaders of the Walnut Valley Unified School District (WVUSD) had been so illuminating that they should be invited to Lexington to learn more about their programs. We also decided that discussions should be broadened to include not only leaders of Lexington's schools but also Town officials. Accordingly, the Subcommittee, together with Dr. Czajkowski and Carl Valente, Town Manager, invited the Superintendent, Dr. Robert Taylor, and the President of the Board of Trustees, Helen Hall, to visit Lexington, and to bring with them a very active parent volunteer. Dr. Taylor and Ms. Hall accepted our invitation, and informed us that they would be joined by Ms. Cecilia Yeh. The visit was set for September 28 – 30, 2016. In addition, to several working sessions, we planned an evening forum, open to all.

Objectives for the visit

Our objectives for the visit were specific. We were interested in the following topics:

- Strategies for leading a school district that has a much larger percentage of students of Asian ancestry than Lexington
- Details of solutions developed by the WVUSD and mentioned in the follow-on dialogue, including:
 - an innovative program for diversity management known as the Diversity Think Tank
 - the history and management of a dual immersion Mandarin-English elementary school of 600 students
 - an annual exchange program with China
 - an unusual system of parent-teacher organizations in their high schools
 - an innovative program for dealing with student stress
- Lessons learned in adjusting the management of a city to reflect the needs of a community whose Asian population grew from about 20 percent to more than 50 percent over a period of 30 years
- The experiences of Asian community organizations over this period

Agenda for the visit

September 29

The day was primarily devoted to three one-hour sessions devoted to topics proposed by the Subcommittee and related to Lexington's schools. In addition to two members of the Subcommittee, participants in the sessions were as follows:

Session 1: Members of the School Committee, the president of the Lexington Education Association, the president of the Association of Lexington Administrators, and current and past chairs of the PTA/O Presidents' Council.

Session 2: Principals, the Director of Early Learning, the Coordinator of the English Language Learner Program and the Director and Assistant Director of Counseling.

Session 3: Superintendent Czajkowski and Central Office Administrators.

Sandy Trach, the Special Assistant to the Superintendent moderated the three sessions.

Session 4: A group of High School students. The session was moderated by Robyn Dowling-Grant, the Coordinator of the English Language Learner Program and by a High School Counselor, Cynthia Tang.

In the evening, a forum featuring all three visitors and open to all, was held in the Cary Memorial Library. The moderator was Dan Krupka, the Subcommittee Chair.

September 30

Session 1: Town Officials – Selectmen Joe Pato and Norm Cohen; Town Manager Carl Valente; Department Directors or leaders: Kelley Axtell (Senior Services), Sheila Butts (Recreation), Mark Corr (Police), Karen Simmons (Recreation), and Koren Stembridge (Library).

Session 2: Leaders of Lexington’s Asian community organizations – the Chinese American Association of Lexington, the Indian Americans of Lexington and the Korean Organization of Lexington

Session 3: Review of the visit’s findings with the Subcommittee on Asian Communities.

Findings from the WVUSD visit

WVUSD leaders strive to create a harmonious environment in a district with the following ethnic composition:

Asian/Pacific Islander	61%
Hispanic/Latino	17%
White	13%
Black/African American	3%

Diversity Think Tank. The Diversity Think Tank is a standing committee devoted to studying topics associated with diversity and turning the ideas into practice. Its objective is creating awareness of diversity (not restricted to ethnic diversity), fostering empathy and recommending practical solutions. Members, who include teachers, students, administrators and others drawn from all walks of the community are led by a trained facilitator. The group meets approximately every five weeks. Between meetings members are given assignments to sensitize them to a variety of cultural issues.

According to Dr. Taylor, the group is credited with generating greater appreciation and understanding of various cultures at WVUSD and building relationships among students from different cultures. While such results may be difficult to quantify, the Diversity Think Tank also concentrates on measurable outcomes. It vetted candidates for delivering training for the staff, and selected the Anti-Defamation League. Its deliberations ultimately led to the establishment of the Wellness Center, a resource for students seeking help with stress-related issues: It started by examining the needs of students, asking about practices that would lead to a better educational experience. The question identified the need for some means of relieving stress. Currently, 40 percent of the 300 students who have made use of the Wellness Center are of Asian origin.

The Diversity Think Tank also stimulated the establishment of a program that allows parents to better understand what happens in schools and how their children are taught. The program is particularly valuable in helping parents gain an understanding of the difference between their own educational experiences and those of their children. Parents spend almost a day at a school, where they are introduced to teaching concepts and then taken to a classroom to observe the application of the concepts. The observations are then discussed and the process is repeated in another classroom.

Another program stimulated by the Diversity Think Tank is a series of talks aimed at helping students and parents make better choices of colleges. Fit is emphasized over reputation.

Diversity training for staff. Approximately 150 of the district's 600 staff members undergo training every year by the Anti-Defamation League. The training is ongoing: It is not "one and done." The numbers suggest that staff is trained every four years.

Dual immersion Mandarin-English elementary school. One of the K-5 elementary schools in the WVUSD is a magnet school, which teaches half the time in Mandarin and half the time in English. It was started with a Kindergarten class, with classes added as the initial cohort progressed. Half of the students speak Mandarin at home, half some other language. According to Superintendent Taylor, by third grade all the students are capable of chattering in Mandarin. Textbooks for such schools are now available. The Mandarin versions mirror the original books written in English.

Exchange program with China. The WVUSD hosts approximately 200 students from China for two to three weeks during Chinese New Year and 500 for one month in the summer. The visiting students are proficient in English and pay 50 dollars per day to the WVUSD. No WVUSD students travel to China, but there is an annual exchange of teachers and administrators.

Translator services. Documents are translated into Chinese and other languages. At schools meetings, separate sessions are convened, with native speakers covering the same material in different languages.

Parent organizations. In the elementary and middle schools, there are no PTAs or PTOs. Instead, there are so-called Community Clubs that serve much the same purpose. Diamond Bar High School has seven parent organizations known as the Magnificent Seven. This group of organizations includes the Chinese American Parents Association, the Korean American Parents Association, the Hispanic Organization for Parents and Education, the Council of African American Parents and the South Asian Parent Association. In addition, there is centralized booster association and a foundation to raise funds for capital improvements. Although the structure of the parent organization is unusual, the smaller, ethnic groups lead to very high levels of participation, and foster a strong link between parents and the schools.

Grade Level Coordinators. At the high school, each student is assigned a Grade Level Coordinator who meets with the student and the student's parents during the summer to discuss academic progress over the past year and to review plans for the upcoming year. This process forces parents to appear at the school and, according to Dr. Taylor, fosters the inclusion of the student and parent.

Superintendent's Student Advisory Council. In early 2016, Dr. Taylor set up council consisting of 25 elementary, middle and high school students to advise on innovative solutions for the schools. The members are given leadership training and expect to meet with Dr. Taylor every six weeks.

Diversity in school staff. Approximately 25 to 35 percent of the school staff is non-Caucasian. Following a top-down approach, particular attention has been paid to recruiting principals: Currently, five of nine elementary school principals are Asian-American and two are Hispanic; one of the three middle-school principals is Hispanic; and two of the three high school principals are African American.

Diversity training in the community. In Walnut, one of the communities served by the WVUSD, the city pays its employees to study Mandarin.

WVUSD leaders' interaction with the community. Both Dr. Taylor and Ms. Hall, urged civic leader to “be visible to the community,” but there is no formula for this. They encourage civic leaders to attend and participate in many events, seek out and build relationships with key people in the community, and recruit their services for the benefit of the community. It can start by simply asking for an hour of their time.

Goal setting. Dr. Taylor believes that a commitment to successful integration of a diverse community requires a systems approach: It cannot depend on the vision and commitment of a few people; it must be built in. For example the membership of the Diversity Think Tank turns over slowly, allowing it to steer a steady course. Similarly, Helen Hall reports that new members of the Board of Trustees are mentored on the established goals of the Board. This does not mean that the Board does not welcome change; rather it means that changes are not radical. Dr. Taylor recommended that we set some integration goals, measure progress and review what has worked and what has not.

Patience. Both Dr. Taylor and Helen Hall cautioned us to be satisfied with small steps, and reminded us that change does not happen overnight.

4.3.6 Lessons from Cupertino, CA

This section describes lessons we have learned primarily through conversations with Cupertino officials, some retired. The conversations, held between December 2015 and September 2016, were not stimulated by responses from the survey but are included here because they were conducted in a manner similar to the dialogues described above.

History

Cupertino is the only municipality included in our study that has taken overt public steps to address relationships between Asian and non-Asian residents.⁵ By the late 1990s, the number of residents of Asian ancestry, predominantly from Taiwan and China, had grown to represent about 40 percent of the population, roughly twice the percentage ten years earlier. According to the City Manager at that time, Don Brown⁶, the elected officials and the City staff began to ask themselves whether they had the responsibility to plan strategically for the growth in the Asian population or deal with any consequences as they occurred.

At about this time, Brown was approached by the Public Dialogue Consortium (PDC), a group of professors from San Jose State University who were seeking a test site for their academically developed communications theory. Their method was aimed at enhancing public dialogue on sensitive issues such as race and ethnicity – issues that did not lend themselves to be placed on the agenda of a city council meeting. After some reflection, Brown gave permission to the PDC to test their concept in a very carefully managed fashion. He believed that “people’s fears and concerns are real and that they need a way to talk about them without the fear of being branded a racist.”

In March 1996, the PDC began by conducting several focus group interviews of randomly selected residents who were asked to identify the most important issues faced by Cupertino. The PDC was surprised to find that every focus group identified tensions attributed to the rapid growth of the

⁵ The evolution of American Asian political action in Cupertino is described in Lai, J.S. (2011) *Asian American Political Action: Suburban Transformations*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc. p. 65.

⁶ Spano, S. (2001). *Public Dialogue and Participatory Democracy: The Cupertino Community Project*. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press. p. ix.

Cupertino's Asian population. Evidently, both the new immigrants and the established residents were aware of the issue, and both felt that the issue was not being discussed in a way that would help to reduce the tensions.

The focus group interviews led to a series of dialogues, training sessions and other actions, culminating in a Town Hall meeting with 150 participants in November 1996. The Cupertino Project continued for the next two years with training for officials, residents and students, the formation of cross-cultural consortium and briefings. Spano helped to conduct town-wide community discussions in 1997, 1998 and 1999.⁷ In 1999, the League of California Cities presented City Manager Don Brown with an award for Advancement of Diversity.

The city-wide forum was revived in 2003 after tensions rose over the naming of a community building after an Asian American donor. Once again, Spano was the facilitator. At the session, the new City Manager, Dave Knapp, stressed the importance of focusing what we have in common – our desire for good schools and a safe environment. He expressed his belief that the best way to bridging the cultural gap was through neighborhood activities such as block parties, block leader programs or Neighborhood Watch.⁸

Subcommittee interactions with Cupertino officials

The Subcommittee first learned of Cupertino's town-wide forums in a call with Michael Chang, mentioned earlier. Through Chang, we learned of the PDC and Shawn Spano's role in the forum. When we contacted Spano for details regarding the Cupertino forums, he referred us to his book, which is the source of much of the above information.

Although the town-wide forums represent a concept that might be replicated in Lexington, we were curious about their long-term impact on the community. Accordingly, with the help of the current city manager, David Brandt, we contacted former city managers Don Brown and Dave Knapp. Brown, now retired, considers the Cupertino Project to be the most rewarding experience in his career as a city manager. However, he cautioned that it represented an extraordinary amount of work, and that a similar program should not be considered unless the municipality has the necessary resources and the commitment of its leadership. According to Brown, the most successful outcome of the project is the Block Party Program, one of whose objectives was to build relationships among the city's residents.

Dave Knapp, who succeeded Brown, agrees with Brown. When Knapp became city manager in 2000, the Block Party Program was already in place, but only a handful of events were held each year. He decided to expand the program because he viewed block parties as an opportunity for neighbors to work together on a problem, and because he recognized that, since all Cupertino neighborhoods were diverse, the block parties would bring people of diverse backgrounds together. Knapp suggested we contact with Cupertino's Community Relations Coordinator Laura Demondon Lee for more details, as Lee had held the position at least since 1999, and would be able to provide a long-term perspective.

Ms. Lee is responsible for the Block Leader Program. According to its web page, "[t]he Block Leader Program teaches residents how to get to know their neighbors and how to organize activities so neighbors can more easily communicate. Block leaders are vital links between City Hall and the neighborhoods - and leaders gain the inside track on neighborhood development and activities." Block

⁷ Cupertino Courier (August 13, 2003). *Bridging Cultural Barriers a Neighborhood at a time*.

⁸ *ibid*

Leaders may organize block parties, but their responsibilities are broader – encompassing neighborhood safety and preparedness, a major concern in light of the area’s history of earthquakes. In fact, the program started after 9/11, when Cupertino residents approached the City with a request for help in communicating with neighborhoods in case of emergencies. It appears that Cupertino city leaders saw a way of satisfying both response to emergencies and the promotion of diversity through a program of interest to all residents.

According to Laura Lee, there are now about 380 Block Leaders, about 40 percent of whom are of Asian ancestry. All Block leaders receive training in emergency preparedness, cultural sensitivity and cultural norms. Ms. Lee is responsible for delivering all training in facilitation, communication, cultural sensitivity. She also communicates with them regarding matters that do not find their way into the City’s newsletter. Block Leaders participate in dinners held three to four times per year, where they are recognized for their work, briefed on developments and learn about additional training opportunities.

Our final conversation was conducted with the current City Manager, David Brandt, and Laura Lee. Town Manager Carl Valente and Selectman Joe Pato participated in the call. Brandt draws a distinction between the Block Party Program and the Block Leader Program. He credits the former with helping to integrate Asian residents into the life of Cupertino. Block Leaders tend to be retirees; only about 20 percent are working. Cupertino has received many inquiries regarding the Block Leader Program since it received recognition from the State of California several years ago and more recent national recognition, the National League of Cities’ NBL/LEO 2015 Diversity Award. Neither Brandt nor Lee is aware of any municipality that has replicated the Program. Cupertino’s demographics are changing as some residents who had come from Taiwan are being replaced by immigrants from the People’s Republic of China and from India. This requires the Block Leader Program to be “recharged” year-to-year.

Assessment of the Cupertino experience

As reported above, the three city managers concur: The Block Party Program is at the core of Cupertino’s strategy of bringing together people of diverse backgrounds. The sequence of focus groups and town-wide forums may have constituted a valuable prologue, but is not necessary.

Cupertino sister cities

In addition to Cupertino, Italy, Cupertino has sister cities whose selection was based on the city’s ethnic makeup: Hsinchu, Taiwan; Toyokawa, Japan; and Brubaneswar, India.

4.3.7 Most significant findings from the dialogues, the visit from Walnut Valley USD and discussions with Cupertino leaders

Civic leaders need to lead the integration. To draw Asian residents into the life of the overall community, civic leaders recommend seeking out the leaders of Asian ethnic communities, whether formal and informal, getting to know them, and finding assignments that can get them started in school and town affairs. In addition, as demonstrated by Cupertino’s block parties and the Block Leader Programs, Asian residents may first be woven into the fabric of the neighborhood.

Diversity training for all. The actions of some of the benchmark communities demonstrate that they are committed to creating awareness of diversity, and are seeking opportunities to train not only school and town staff but also parents to be a welcoming force in a diverse community. The training is ongoing; it requires repetition. The most committed school districts appear to be the most successful in building up a staff whose ethnic makeup is on the path to reflecting the ethnic makeup of the students.

Opportunities for municipal departments. Libraries play an important welcoming role in many communities. In addition, recreation departments can introduce programs that recognize the municipality's diversity and perhaps introduce non-Asian residents to traditionally Asian sports or activities.

A diversity quality improvement program. Quality improvement programs have followed a plan-do-check-act sequence or some variant. Such a program could be adapted for helping to increase integration. It would require goals to be set, progress to be tracked and assessment of the impact of steps taken followed by repetition of the cycle.

5 SURPRISING FINDINGS

We began our project with the hope that we would uncover a handful of surprising concepts and practices that we might adopt in Lexington. Fortunately, our hopes have been realized. Some of the concepts may be viewed as extensions of what is already being done in Lexington, while others represent a substantial departure from local practice. The findings, described below, confirm what we sensed but did not articulate at the outset of our project: There is no magic bullet, no single solution to successful integration.

Meaningful outreach. The survey confirmed that integration of Asian residents into the life of the community requires, in part, outreach on the part of civic leaders. Virtually every survey respondent made this suggestion. The dialogues and the visitors from Walnut Valley taught us that meaningful outreach requires a commitment to getting to know the leaders of the ethnic communities – formal as well as informal – at a personal level. Occasional, contact in formal settings is not enough.

Diversity training. Our surveys had no questions regarding diversity training. Yet, most of the school-related respondents told us about their programs, either in the survey or in the dialogues.

Diversity Think Tank. Walnut Valley USD introduced us to the concept of a standing group devoted to the theory and practice in diversity. As described in the previous section, the Diversity Think Tank has had a major impact on the system.

Dual immersion schools. In the survey for superintendents, we were seeking information on modifications to the existing curriculum that reflected changes in the demographics of the students, and had expected to learn about incremental changes. The dialogues exposed us to much bolder steps: two dual-immersion Mandarin-English elementary schools and one dual-immersion Spanish-English elementary school. In fulfilling their objectives of teaching world languages at the elementary level, these school districts also support the ethnic diversity of their communities.

Stress in schools. Every school district leader, whether the superintendent or the head of the school board, reported high levels of student stress. All of the districts considered themselves to be high performing and all had instituted programs to deal with stress.

Role of the recreation department. Because the Cary Memorial Library has played an important role in drawing Asian residents into the life of Lexington, we were not surprised to learn that municipal libraries in the benchmark municipalities play a similar role. More surprising were the contributions made by recreation departments in identifying the needs of Asian residents and adjusting their programs to their interests.

Service organizations as promoters of diversity. In two municipalities, Rotary Clubs decided that their membership should reflect the ethnic composition of the community, and appear to have become stepping stones to elected office for some Asian residents.

A Caucasian on the board of an ethnic community organization. A city manager told us that he had suggested to his community's Chinese organization that it add a Caucasian to its board. However, the organization had not implemented the suggestion at the time of our conversation.

Integration at the neighborhood level. The growth and apparent success of Cupertino's Block Leader and Block Party Program, suggest that getting neighbors together can be an effective pathway to integration.

One courageous leader can initiate change. In Cupertino, the City Manager, Don Brown, put his career at risk by applying a novel communication theory to discussions on race and diversity. Although, the City Council understood and supported his initiative, he was initially seen as the leader. Only as the Cupertino Project began to take shape, did the Council members become more visible.

In the long run, a systems approach. Our visitors from Walnut Valley believe that successful integration relies on a systems approach: In the long run, it cannot rely on a handful of committed people. And, as a system, it requires goals to be set, performance to be measured and modification of processes, if indicated. For the municipalities of Diamond Bar and Walnut, the Walnut Valley USD plays a leading role.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

We believe that successful integration of our Asian residents requires all Lexington residents to be more sensitive to our ethnic diversity. In particular, it demands the commitment and example of our Town's leaders. By embracing our cultural diversity and richness, we will create an even more vibrant community.

6.1 RECOMMENDATION 1 – FOR THE TOWN MANAGER AND THE SUPERINTENDENT

Take the lead in establishing a diverse, multi-stakeholder standing body, modeled on Walnut Valley's Diversity Think Tank. To build credibility for its role, we recommend that the members begin by becoming familiar with relevant literature and the experiences of some model communities. The members' next task should be to assess and select diversity training programs. For the schools, the programs should cover teachers, administrators, members of the School Committee and the PPC. Similarly, for the Town the programs should be for Town departments, the Board of Selectmen and other elected officials, including Town Meeting. In the longer term, the responsibilities of the group may include generating ideas for school- or town celebrations, suggesting metrics to assess progress of integration and recommending benchmarking activities along the lines described in this report. In budgets for the next fiscal year, include funds for diversity training. Target date for establishing the diversity body: June 30, 2017.

6.2 RECOMMENDATION 2 – FOR THE TOWN MANAGER, THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN, THE SUPERINTENDENT AND THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Establish a higher priority for getting to know, at a personal level, leaders of Lexington's Asian community organizations. In addition to participating regularly in the organizations' meetings and functions where they become acquainted with the leaders, we recommend that they take the time for one-on-one, informal meetings. Target date: Begin immediately.

6.3 RECOMMENDATION 3 – FOR THE LEADERS OF THE ASIAN COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

In addition to the steps that have already been taken, viz., communicating with civic leaders, supporting the Lexington community and collaborating with PTA/O organization:

- As a complement to Recommendation 2, get to know at a personal level the Town Manager, members of the Board of Selectmen, the Superintendent and the members of the School Committee. Target date: Begin immediately.
- Strengthen programs to help newcomers integrate into the community. Target date: Begin immediately.
- Consider sponsoring leadership training for potential leaders along the lines offered by Cupertino-based Asian Pacific American Leadership Institute. Target date: June 30, 2017.

6.4 RECOMMENDATION 4 – FOR THE TOWN MANAGER

- Increase efforts to hire more Town employees of Asian ancestry. Target date: Begin immediately.
- Explore broadening the programs of the Recreation Department to include even more offerings of interest to families of Asian ancestry, particularly when such programs would be expected to have a broad appeal. Target date: June 30, 2017.
- Pilot the concept of a block party program such as Cupertino's. Target date: December 31, 2017.

6.5 RECOMMENDATION 5 – FOR THE PTA/O PRESIDENTS' COUNCIL

- In collaboration with the Asian community organizations, continue to host forums fostering participation in school volunteer programs.
- Request a seat on the "Diversity Think Tank" when it is being formed. Target date: To coincide with implementation of Recommendation 1.

6.6 RECOMMENDATION 6 – FOR THE SUPERINTENDENT

- Increase efforts to hire principals who reflect the demographics of the school system. Target date: Begin immediately
- Encourage principals to hire a more diverse staff. Target date: Begin immediately.
- At the high school level, adopt the practice of guidance counselors holding meetings with students and their parents to review progress and to plan the following year's academic program. Target date: June 30, 2017.
- Consider setting up a resource along the lines of the Wellness Center at WVUSD.
- Consider the creation of a body similar to the Student Advisory Council.

6.7 RECOMMENDATION 7 – FOR THE 20/20 VISION COMMITTEE

- Continue to monitor progress toward increased integration. Target date: Begin immediately.
- Convene a session in May 2017 to assess progress following a format similar to that used in May 2015.

6.8 RECOMMENDATION 8 – FOR ALL

Although most of the above recommendations concern Lexington's Asian community, the Subcommittee recognizes that they comprise concepts that apply to people of all backgrounds.

In **Table 4**, we summarize the above recommendations by official or body to which they are made.

Table 4 - Summary of recommendations

<i>Superintendent</i>	<i>School Committee</i>	<i>PTA/O Presidents' Council</i>	<i>Town Manager</i>	<i>Board of Selectmen</i>	<i>CAAL, IAL, KOLex</i>
Rec. 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Diversity Think Tank” • Diversity training • Budget for diversity-related programs 			Rec. 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Diversity Think Tank” • Diversity training • Budget for diversity-related programs 		Rec. 3: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased priority for reaching out to Town leaders • Stronger programs for integrating newcomers • Leadership training?
Rec. 2 Increased priority for reaching out to leaders of CAAL, IAL, KOLex	Rec. 2 Increased priority for reaching out to leaders of CAAL, IAL, KOLex	Rec. 5: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued collaboration on forums with CAAL, IAL, KOLex • Membership on Diversity Think Tank 	Rec. 2 Increased priority for reaching out to leaders of CAAL, IAL, KOLex	Rec. 2 Increased priority for reaching out to leaders of CAAL, IAL, KOLex	
Rec. 6: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More hiring of principals of Asian ancestry • Encourage principals to hire more teachers of Asian ancestry • Annual meeting of guidance counselors with student and parents • Wellness Center? • Student Advisory Committee? 			Rec. 4: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More hiring of employees of Asian ancestry • More recreation programs of interest to Asian families • Consider block party program like Cupertino’s 		

7 CONCLUSIONS

Our work has demonstrated that Lexington can successfully obtain information on an important and sensitive topic from demographically similar communities across the country. Our experience suggests that securing such information requires a thoughtful selection of benchmark partners, a well-crafted invitation to participate in the process, a survey that confirms our earnestness and rigor, candid conversations between civic leaders, and – most importantly – the support of our leaders.

Thanks to the efforts of many in Lexington, we have the information. Now, it's up to us to act on it.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We are very grateful for the candor and insights of the civic leaders in California and New Jersey who completed our survey and who graciously shared with us more information during follow-on dialogues. Because we pledged to respect their privacy, they are not named in the report. We make an exception, however, for two leaders from the Walnut Valley Unified School District (WVUSD) in California: Ms. Helen Hall, President of the Board of Trustees of WVUSD and Dr. Robert Taylor, the Superintendent. They devoted three days of their busy schedules to visit Lexington and to speak with many of our civic leaders. We have learned much from the exchange. Our special thanks also go out to Ms. Cecilia Yeh, a parent volunteer and the third member of the WVUSD delegation. Michele Lew, President and CEO of the Asian Americans for Community Involvement, helped us understand Asian communities in the Bay Area. Dr. Michael Chang, founder and executive director of the Asian Pacific American Leadership Institute, introduced us to the town-wide forums in Cupertino. He triggered an exchange with Prof. Shawn Spano of San Jose State University, who led us to the Cupertino Project and its leading participants. We are indebted to Cupertino City Manager, David Brandt, and to the Cupertino Community Relations Coordinator, Laura Demondon Lee, for helping us to understand the Block Leaders Program and the Block Party Program. Former Cupertino City Managers, Don Brown and Dave Knapp took time to share their thoughts on the long-term impact of the Cupertino Project. Professor James Lai of Santa Clara University validated the findings of the Cupertino Project.

Professor Marian Cohen of the Department of Sociology at Framingham State University (FSU) and the Director of its Center for Social Research gave us critical guidance at the beginning of the project and, along with FSU students, created the survey instrument, analyzed the results and produced the report in Appendix D. We could not have done this work without her.

We owe special gratitude to Lexington's civic leaders. As described in this report, they were active collaborators in all phases of this project. We wish to single out Town Manager, Carl Valente, who first advanced the idea of the project in 2009 and whose office provided vital support; Selectman Joe Pato who helped us write an effective letter to survey candidates; our Superintendent, Dr. Mary Czajkowski whose enthusiasm for the project stimulated the visit from the WVUSD, who was instrumental in organizing the visit, and who participated in many of its sessions; Bill Hurley, Chair of the School Committee for participating in all the dialogues with Dr. Czajkowski and for enthusiastically supporting the WVUSD visit; and Jessie Steigerwald, former Chair of the School Committee for her early support of the project. The project was supported by a 15,000 dollar budget authorized by the Town of Lexington.

The project had the active support of Lexington's Asian community organizations, not only through membership on the Subcommittee but also through all phases of the project. We thank the following: Neerja Bajaj, KwiYoung Choi, April Daciuk, Nirmala Garimella, Diamond Hayes, Eileen Jay, Peter Lee, Geeta Padaki, Archana Singhal, Ruixi Yuan, Hua Wang, and Weidong Wang.

For their help in formulating the questions for PTA/O leaders and for participating in the interviews, we thank the current and former presidents of the PTA/O Presidents' Council, Gretchen Reisig and Bettina McGimsey.

After we had exhausted our skills at tracking down old newspaper articles, Jean Williams of the Cary Memorial Library was able to locate the story in the now-defunct Cupertino Courier reported in

Reference 7. We also thank the Director of the Cary Memorial Library, Koren Stenbridge, for her early and ongoing support. Cathy Severance, Office Manager for Lexington's Town Manager handled of the correspondence in connection with the surveys. She and Miriam Sousa, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent of the Lexington Public Schools patiently scheduled the follow-on dialogues and the WVUSD visit.

Finally, we wish to acknowledge the advice and support of the Lexington 20/20 Vision Committee, which chartered the work of the Subcommittee and Fernando Quezada, Chair of the 20/20 Vision Committee for advice on the Introduction.

APPENDIX A – CHARTER OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON ASIAN COMMUNITIES

What lessons can Lexington learn about capitalizing on the presence of a growing number of Asian residents from other communities with large Asian population?

Background – Recommendation of the Subcommittee on Demographic Change

“We recommend that the Lexington 2020 Vision Committee continue to monitor and report on demographic trends and civic participation by Asian residents. In addition, we recommend that it investigate the experiences in other US communities, with larger percentages of Asian residents and demographics similar to Lexington’s.”

Objectives for a project to investigate experiences in other communities

1. Identify practices and initiatives that might be considered for adoption in Lexington to
 - a. increase the civic engagement of its Asian residents.
 - b. benefit from the diverse cultures and experiences of its Asian residents
2. Identify experiences of communities with large Asian populations which Lexington should avoid replicating

Project deliverables

1. Using Census Bureau data, identify communities whose Asian populations exceed 20% of the total population.
2. Conduct a literature/internet search for data and information on relationships between the Asian communities and other communities, focusing on practices or initiatives that proved to be effective in enriching the life of the community as a whole or engaging the Asian communities in civic activities.
3. Prepare an interim report.
4. Use the lessons learned in Step 2 to select communities to be studied in greater detail. In narrowing the list of candidates for study, consider communities whose demographics resemble Lexington’s in terms of population, percentage of Asian residents, mix of Asian residents and median family income.
5. Conduct an intensive study of these communities, including Town documents, newspaper reports and interviews with community leaders.
6. Summarize findings and recommendations in a final report no later than 18 months after launching the project.

Project team structure and operations

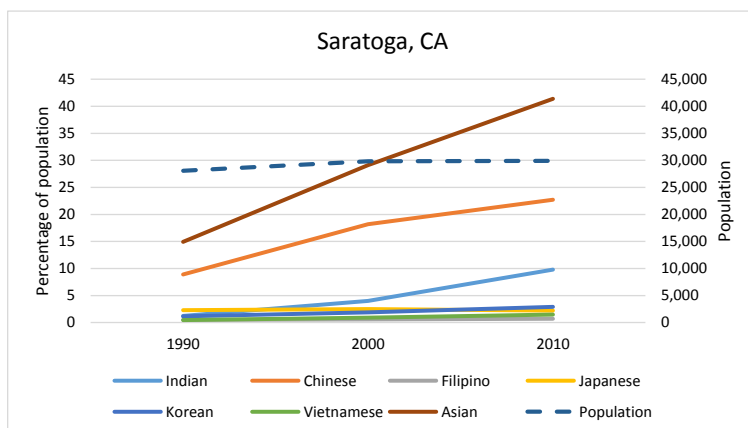
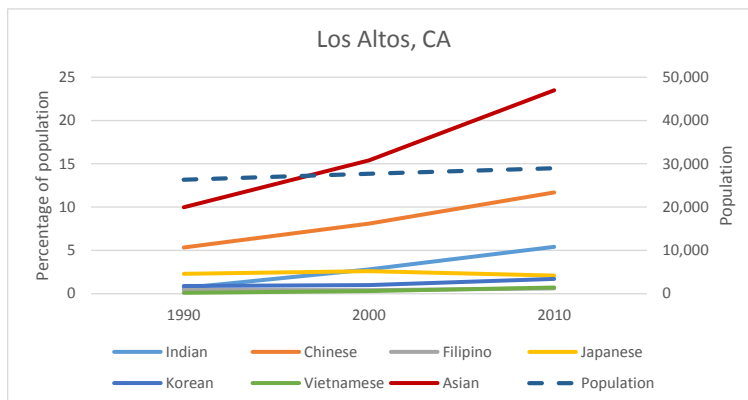
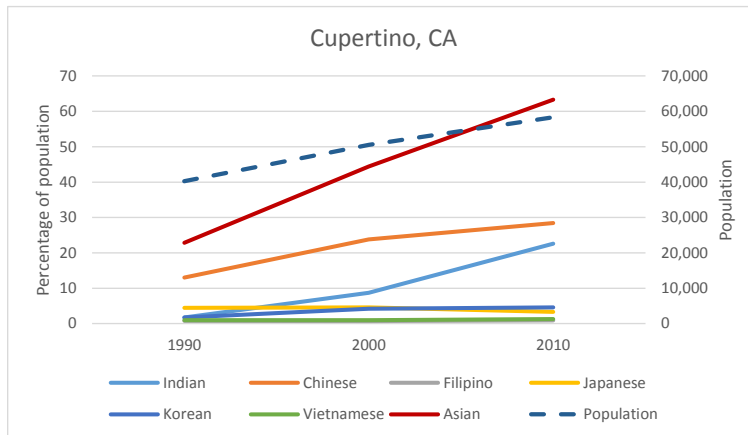
1. Appoint a leader for the subcommittee.
2. Use the structure of the Subcommittee on Demographic Change – a combination of members of the 20/20 Vision Committee, members of CAAL and IAL, and other interested residents – as a guide in structuring the team.

3. Amend the draft charter if the team believes it needs to be modified; secure approval for any changes from the 20/20 Vision Committee.
4. Construct and follow a project plan.
5. Record meeting minutes, focusing primarily on decisions made and action items.
6. Report on progress at the regular meetings of the 20/20 Vision Committee.

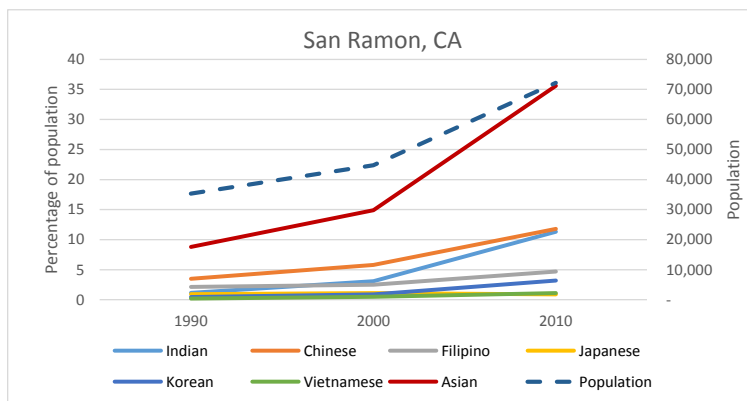
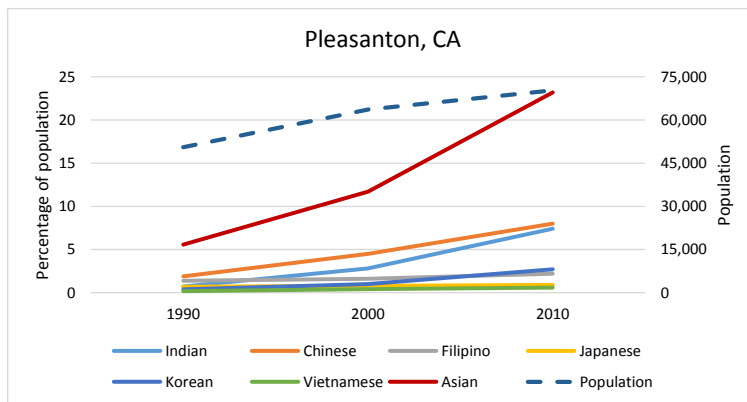
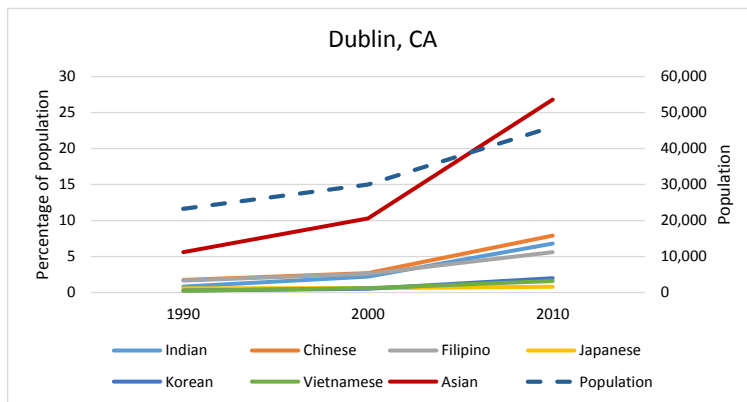
APPENDIX B – BREAKDOWN OF ASIAN POPULATIONS IN BENCHMARK MUNICIPALITIES FOR 1990, 2000 AND 2010

The following pages show the breakdown of the Asian populations of the Benchmark municipalities. Lexington is included for comparison. All data are from the Census Bureau.

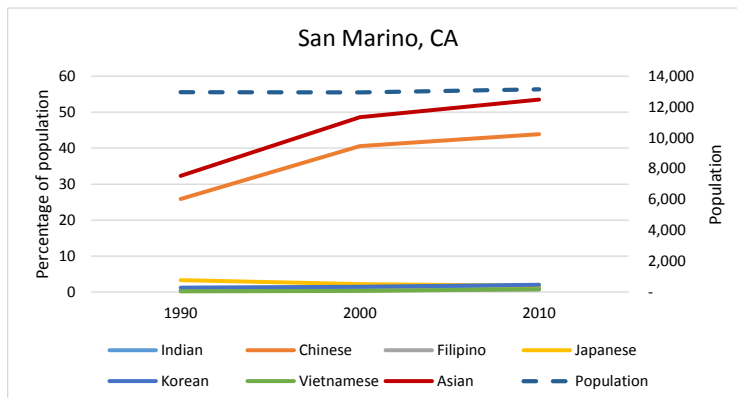
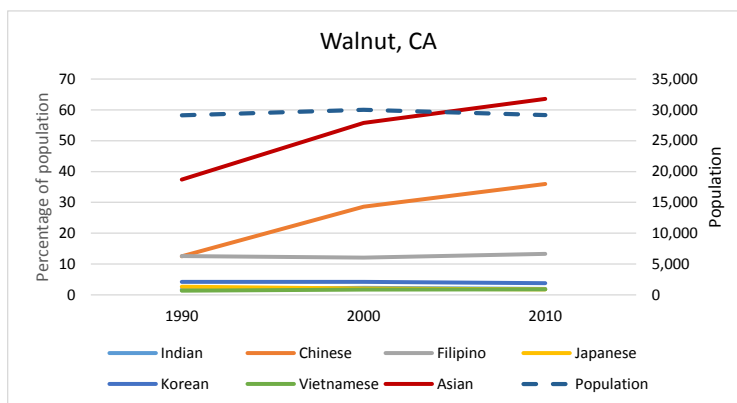
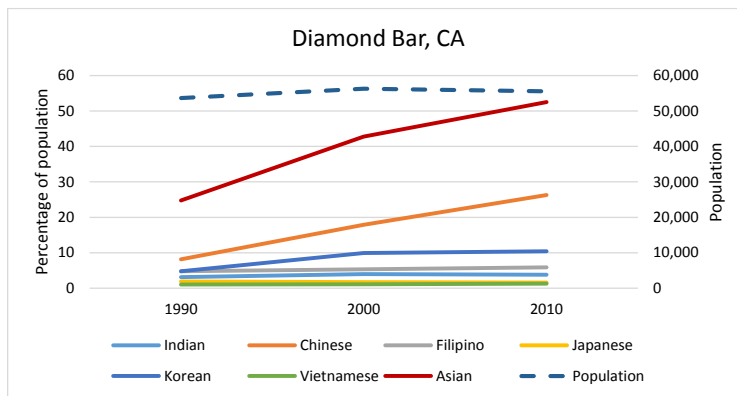
Silicon Valley Municipalities



East San Francisco Bay Municipalities

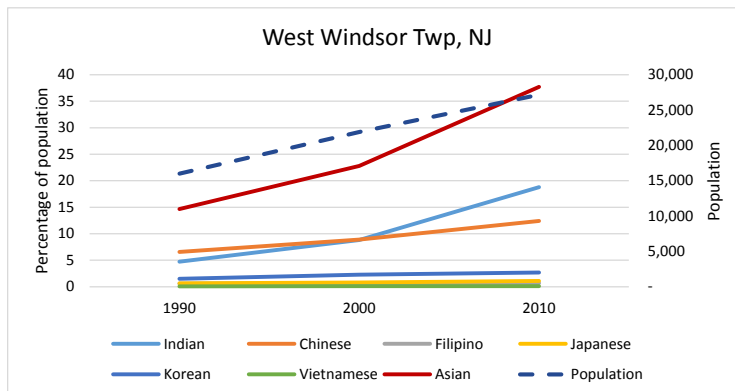
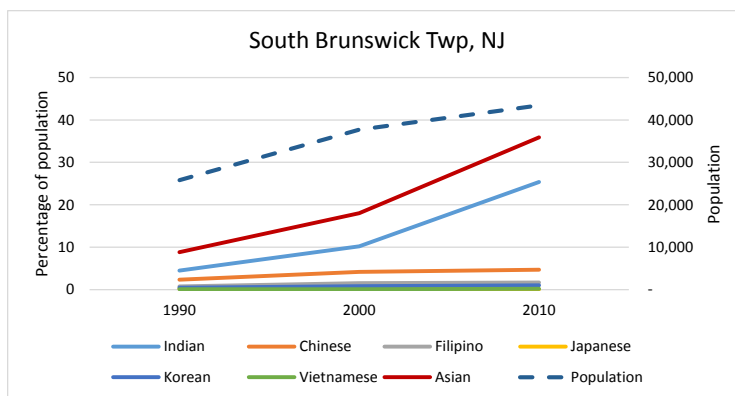
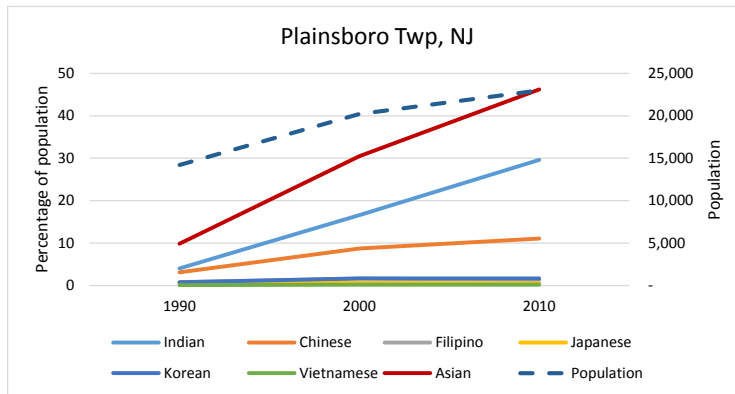


San Gabriel Valley Municipalities

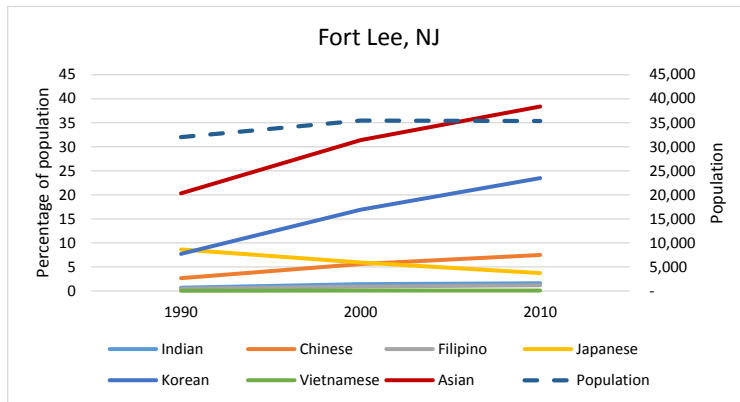


Although Walnut, CA is not one of the Benchmark municipalities, it is included here because it shares the Walnut Valley Unified School System with the neighboring city of Diamond Bar.

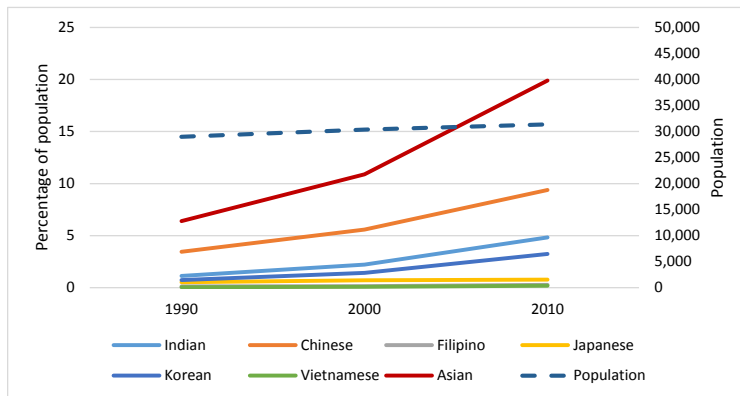
Central New Jersey Municipalities



Northern New Jersey Municipality



Lexington



APPENDIX C – RECRUITMENT LETTER

Dear :

We write to ask for your help with an important study sponsored by The Town of Lexington, MA. We are seeking to learn from civic leaders in 12 carefully selected cities and towns in California and New Jersey about steps they have taken to increase the inclusion of residents of Asian ancestry on local elected and appointed bodies as well as in parent-teacher organizations, organized sports, and other community-related activities.

Here in Lexington, where residents of Asian ancestry represent 22 percent of our population of about 32,000, we have made substantial progress over the past five years in increasing their representation on elected and appointed Town bodies and on PTA/O boards. Now, we wish to further increase their inclusion. We propose to do this by building on the lessons learned in communities similar to Lexington in terms of total population and other demographics, but whose Asian populations are relatively larger than Lexington's and whose Asian residents are well represented on elected and appointed bodies.

We believe that we can achieve our objective by drawing on the generous advice of the following civic leaders: the mayor; the city, town, or township manager; the superintendent of schools; the head of the school board; the head of a PTA or PTO; and leaders of the local Asian community organizations.

We propose to proceed as follows: In Step 1, we would send you a link to a survey, customized for your position (e.g., mayor), that will require approximately 15 minutes to complete. In Step 2, which we would take only with your consent, we would arrange a conversation between you (or someone whom you would designate) and one of Lexington's civic leaders or a member of the committee charged with this project.

Please confirm your willingness to participate in our study by sending a note to the organizing committee at 2020visioncmte@lexingtonma.gov. Because we are contacting such a small number of leaders, we sincerely hope we can count on you. Naturally, we will share our final report with you.

We thank you in advance.

Joseph N.

Chair, Board of

Selectmen

Pato Carl F. Valente

Town Manager

Jessie

Chair, School
Schools

Steigerwald

Committee

Mary Czajkowski

Superintendent, Lexington Public

APPENDIX D – REPORT OF THE CENTER FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH

The Report of the Center for Social Research may be found on the web site of the Lexington 20/20 Vision Committee: <http://www.lexingtonma.gov/2020-vision-committee/pages/subcommittee-asian-communities>

Please look for “Final Report of the Center for Social Research” under “Findings” at the bottom of the page.